





EUROPE  
IN THE  
XIX<sup>TH</sup> & XX<sup>TH</sup>  
CENTURIES  
1815 — 1939

BY  
E. LIPSON

FIFTH EDITION  
WITH TWELVE PORTRAITS AND SIX MAPS

*Rs.*

*CAT*  
*[Signature]*

LONDON  
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK

THIS COMBINED VOLUME FIRST PUBLISHED 1940

SECOND EDITION 1944

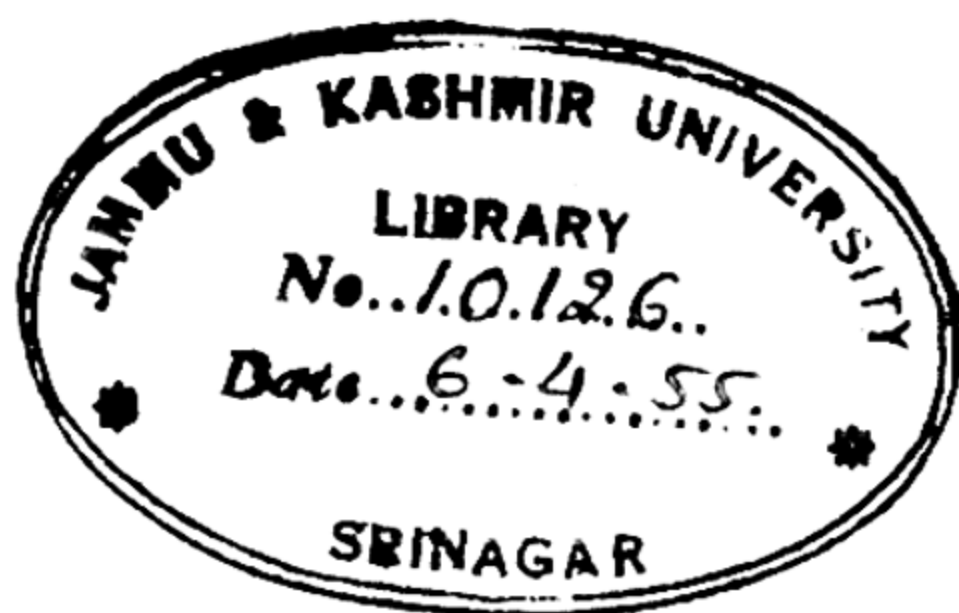
THIRD EDITION 1946

FOURTH EDITION 1947

FIFTH EDITION 1949, REPRINTED 1953

(COMPRISING THE EIGHTH EDITION OF 'EUROPE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY'  
AND THE FIFTH EDITION OF 'EUROPE 1914-1939')

A. AND C. BLACK LTD. 4-6 SOHO SQUARE, LONDON, W.1



*Europe - history*



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## PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION

THIS book is an expansion of my *Europe in the Nineteenth Century* (1815-1914). The addition of a new chapter on "The Last Twenty-Five Years" (1914-1939), comprising nearly two hundred pages, appears to be justified by the momentous character of the epoch-making events which bridge the two World Wars. The attempt to establish an international order based on the renunciation of war, the creation of Totalitarian States resting on the domination of a single party enveloping like a political octopus the whole life of a nation, the reaction against the conception of a world economy: these movements give a distinctive place in History to a very memorable quarter of a century. For this reason they merit the attention of all who seek to comprehend the complex issues which mould the course of European evolution. The Second World War (1939-1945) has served to accentuate the imperative need for a proper knowledge of our own times. It left behind it a legacy of problems, political and economic, which must profoundly affect the future trend of the European State-system—either by intensifying the forces that now make for separatism, or by harmonizing the divergent interests of discordant elements within the unifying framework of some form of Federal Union. Indeed upon the successful handling of these difficult problems in the fateful years of post-war reconstruction will in a large measure depend ultimately the peace of the world. The importance of building up an authoritative organization—inspired with the determination, in the words

of the Charter, "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind"—should strengthen our desire both to understand the origins of the cataclysms that set in motion two titanic conflicts, and to assess the consequences as they unfold themselves before our eyes. Prediction is doubtless hazardous when we follow what happens in the European scene from day to day, for personality or chance often seems to dictate the immediate march of events; yet we may feel confident that the pattern must be true to the design, and that the historical factors which shape human destiny will eventually write the last phase of the story.

I have endeavoured to show in the final chapter the interdependence of political and economic influences at work in the recent development of Europe. The growth of Economic Nationalism, as the fruit and counterpart of Political Nationalism, exerted a baneful influence on the relationships of European nations and contributed in a vital degree to make inevitable the renewal of war in 1939. In addition, the Socialist State in Soviet Russia and the Corporate State in Fascist Italy are phenomena which belong to the sphere of politics as well as of economics, and therefore constitute an integral part of the political evolution of Modern Europe.

The plan on which the present book is based has given rise to some discussion as to the best way of writing European History. The traditional practice of surveying it from the standpoint of international politics is here discarded in favour of a method of treatment which affords a concise and connected account—analytical rather than narrative—of the internal development of the chief European States since the fall of Napoleon. Professor F. J. C. Hearnshaw, in his *Main Currents of European History*, after

quoting the preface to the original edition, compares the different systems adopted by historians. I believe that students and general readers are more likely to obtain an intelligent grasp of European History when each country is treated as a separate entity, as far as is possible, although due regard must be paid to the working of forces which have affected the destinies of all. I recognize, however, that there is ample room for other methods nor is there any necessity for adopting one to the exclusion of the rest.

E. LIPSON.

*October, 1948*

## NOTE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

NUMEROUS changes have been made in this edition in order to bring the wording of the text into conformity with the altered European situation

E. L.

*March, 1946*

M. YOUSUF, (History Previc  
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This book is  
useful for a student  
to understand fully the  
European history  
Jedank

# EUROPE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

## CHAPTER I

### REACTION AND REVOLUTION IN FRANCE

(1815-1870)

NAPOLEON bequeathed to his successors the problem of reconciling two divergent aims: the establishment of a form of government acceptable to France combined with the pursuit of a policy acceptable to Europe. For over half a century this problem taxed to the utmost the resources of French statesmanship. The French people were resolved at all costs to break up the settlement of 1815, which was associated in their minds with contracted frontiers and loss of national prestige. The Powers were equally resolved to preserve this settlement in all its integrity, conscious that its violation would open the door to endless confusion and the peril of a European conflagration. Three different attempts were made to devise a satisfactory solution of the problem; each in turn met with failure. The position of the Bourbons was compromised from the outset by their dependence upon the Allies, in whose baggage-train, as it was scornfully said, they had returned to France. While the crisis which precipitated their ruin was provoked by the folly of their domestic administration, their fall would appear to have been inevitable sooner or later. The Orleans Monarchy adopted a foreign policy which was in diametrical opposition to the wishes of the nation, and the support of the middle classes only retarded, but could not avert, its

1815  
—  
*Problems  
of French  
history.*

1815 — ultimate downfall. Napoleon III. was more fortunate in rallying French sentiment for a time to his throne, but his very success involved the alienation of Europe, whose apprehensions were awakened by his efforts to revive the glories of the First Empire ; and in the end he, too, shared the fate of his predecessors. The record of these three successive attempts constitutes the history of France from 1815 to 1870 ; they furnish the thread which gives unity and coherence to the period.

*The Ultra-Royalists.*

The restoration of the Bourbon dynasty to the throne of France furnished the signal for the outbreak of political strife. The country was divided into two parties, and for fifteen years a struggle ensued which wore all the appearance of an epilogue to the more titanic conflict of 1789. The issues at stake merit attention, because in their light alone we can interpret the confused and troubled events which lead up to the cataclysm of 1830. On one side were grouped the Ultra-Royalists, the obstinate and relentless enemies of the French Revolution, inflexibly resolved not only to stem the rising tide of Liberalism, but to turn back the whole course of French historical development into reactionary channels. They represented the traditional policy of the *émigrés* who had always repudiated the Revolution, and all its works, being pledged to leave no stone unturned until they were once more entrenched in the stronghold of absolutism and privilege. Their fanaticism, the outgrowth of embittered memories, was inexplicable to the new generation which had grown up in the midst of social conditions that already seemed part and parcel of the immutable, unchanging order of the Universe. It was unintelligible even to moderate Royalists : " I do not understand your passions, your relentless hatreds," said Richelieu ; " I pass every day by the house which belonged to my ancestors, I see their property in other hands, and I behold in museums the treasures which belonged to them. It is a sad sight ; but it does not rouse in me feelings either of despair or revenge. You appear to me sometimes to be out of your minds, all of you who have remained in France." His counsels of moderation fell upon deaf ears. For twenty

years the partisans of the *ancien régime* had openly or in secrecy nourished the passion of revenge, waiting for the day when the turn of the wheel of fortune would place the government of France in their hands and enable them to strike a blow at their enemies. In the moment of their triumph it required a magnanimity which only the best minds could feel not to abuse their power, and to sacrifice their own feelings for the general welfare of their country. Unfortunately neither magnanimity nor moderation was a virtue which the Ultra-Royalists had learnt to cultivate, and their excesses brought upon them signal retribution.

The leading idea of the Ultra-Royalist programme was nothing less than to revive the old order, together with certain modifications conceived not in the interests of the monarchy, but in those of the nobility. To achieve this design, they contemplated first of all the restoration of the Catholic Church to its former ascendancy, resting all their projects upon an alliance between Church and State, the altar and the throne. They proposed to endow it with whatever ecclesiastical property, confiscated at the time of the Revolution, still remained in the hands of the State; this was intended to form the nucleus for the growth of a landed Church, fortified by all the authority and prestige which the possession of land alone could confer. At the same time the direction of education, and the vast influence which springs from its wise administration, were given over to the charge of ecclesiastics. A bishop was appointed president of the University (1822), and entrusted with powers of control over the schools so extensive as to constitute almost a dictatorship of education. The Jesuits also were permitted to return to France, and to set up their own seminaries, where instruction was given gratuitously. Once the clerical party was established in an impregnable position, it could then assume the task of reconstructing the social and political system of France under the pretence of re-invigorating its spiritual and moral life. Under the cover of religious teaching the seeds of reaction would be sown far and wide, and the mind of the country thus pre-

*Their programme.*



1815

pared for the complete transformation of the existing order. The work of the Church in teaching resignation and submission was to be supplemented by a vigorous censorship, which would enable the Government to repress every newspaper or other publication detrimental to the objects it had in view. Public opinion, fettered and controlled, was to be moulded on approved lines, and the nation was to be denied the right of free discussion lest it should awaken to a sense of the perils to which its liberties were exposed. Even foreign policy was to be exploited in a manner which would reconcile the French nation to the most sweeping changes in their domestic situation. The great writer, Chateaubriand, contended that the Bourbon dynasty would never strike deep root in the hearts of the people until it had covered itself with glory on the field of battle. "The white cockade will be established when it has once more faced the foe." Yet a stable monarchy and an endowed Church were only means to an end; primarily the Ultra-Royalists were fighting for the privileges of their own order. Nothing less than this was to be the price of their allegiance. They were bent on recovering their forfeited property and whatever rights the old nobility had possessed on the eve of the Revolution, but in addition they claimed a measure of political power from which hitherto they had always been excluded.

*The  
upholders  
of the  
Revolution.*

In opposition to the Ultra-Royalists were the moderate elements, pledged "to defend the Revolution and continue it without the revolutionary spirit." This party, in the words of their own leader, "dreamt of an alliance between order and liberty, between Legitimacy and the Revolution." Their attitude was in reality conservative, and their policy almost purely negative. They had no sympathy with extreme views, and accepted the monarchy imposed upon them by the arms of the Allies, willing to remain loyal to the King, so long as the King remained loyal to the conditions on which he held his throne. But the cardinal tenet of their faith, to which they passionately and resolutely adhered, was the determination never to relinquish their firm grasp upon the heritage bequeathed to them by the

Revolution. To restore the *ancien régime* with its political, social, and religious traditions was to undo the laborious work of a generation, and a second time to incarcerate the soul of the nation in the prison-house of bondage. The Moderates took their stand by the Charter, which Louis XVIII. had promulgated on his accession to the French throne. Its importance lay in the fact that it definitely repudiated the traditions of the *ancien régime*, and substituted in their place the traditions of the Revolution and the Empire. From the Revolution it took over as part and parcel of the law of France the principles of toleration, equality before the law, and admission to all public offices ; from the Empire it borrowed the machinery of centralized administration. The Charter also gave the French people rights of control over the Government, which they had not possessed under the Empire. It established a legislative assembly consisting of two Chambers : one composed of peers, who were either hereditary or nominated by the Crown for life ; the other chosen by election, though on a very narrow basis, the franchise being confined to those who paid £13 yearly in direct taxes. The executive alone could initiate legislation, but the Lower Chamber was allowed to reject its proposals and refuse taxes. Whatever its drawbacks, the Charter was at any rate a guarantee of constitutional monarchy and representative government ; it was a social compact between the King and his people, while for all the moderate elements in the country it constituted a confession of political faith.

Between the partisans of the *ancien régime* and the upholders of the new order no reconciliation could be effected. It was impossible to harmonize their aims or their principles. One party or the other would have to succumb, for France could not continue indefinitely to be torn by their struggles for supremacy. In the long run, as we can now see, there could only have been one issue to the conflict, though the immediate course of events was determined by the personal attitude of the King. It was fortunate for the Bourbon dynasty that Louis XVIII. was under no misapprehension as to the temper of the nation or the precariousness of his

1815

The  
Charter.Louis  
XVIII.

1815  
—

own situation,<sup>1</sup> and steadfastly refused to throw in his lot with the extremists or to countenance their incendiary campaign. The condition of affairs, in fact, was parallel to that which existed in England after the Restoration of 1660. Alike in England and France the position of the restored monarch was endangered by the extravagance of those who were more royalist than the King, and whose reactionary violence and revengeful passions brought the monarchy into discredit. Alike in England and France the King, inclined to moderation and unwilling to go again on his travels, managed to steer his course safely between conflicting tendencies, and so postponed the crisis. And alike in England where Charles II. was succeeded by his brother James II., and in France where Louis XVIII. was succeeded by his brother Charles X., the bigotry of the new sovereign speedily provoked a storm of opposition which only subsided after it had driven the King headlong from his throne.

The  
Chambre  
Introuvable.

From the first moment of the restored monarchy, the Ultra-Royalists began to formulate their programme, and to stir up a flood of political passions. A general election was held after the entrance of the Allies into Paris, when the revolutionary elements had been intimidated into passive acquiescence, and resulted in a sweeping majority for the reactionaries. The new Chamber of Deputies, called by Louis the *Chambre Introuvable*, was vindictive and intemperate, and the energies of the Government were almost completely absorbed in a fruitless attempt to curb its intolerant fanaticism. Talleyrand and the Liberal ministry were at once compelled to resign, and their place was taken by the Duc de Richelieu. Richelieu had shown himself a wise administrator in the service of the Tsar whose confidence he enjoyed, and his accession to office was a pledge of more favourable terms in the peace negotiations with the Allies. His statesmanlike moderation was also the best augury for the stability of the Bourbon monarchy, but this quality did not recommend him to the Chamber which

<sup>1</sup> "There seems but one opinion," wrote Castlereagh, "that if the Allied troops were to withdraw, his Majesty would not be on his throne a week": *Correspondence of Castlereagh* (1853), third ser. iii. 32.



pressed upon the minister the most violent and objectionable proposals. The irreconcilables would brook no talk of compromise ; they demanded the wholesale proscription of all who had incurred the taint of revolution, and the concessions made to their clamour only had the effect of stimulating them to increased exertions. They also proposed that the claims of Napoleon's creditors, who had lent money to the State on public security, should be met by the payment of only three-fifths. This breach of faith would have been equivalent to a declaration of national insolvency ; it would have ruined the credit of France, and made it impossible to raise money to liquidate the war indemnity. Confronted with a grave financial crisis, the King accepted the advice of Decazes and suddenly dissolved the Chambers (1816). The step was a bold one ; but it was justified by success. The verdict of the country expressed in the clearest terms its disapproval of the Ultra-Royalist programme, and a decisive majority was returned in support of the Government. The monarchy, brought to the brink of a precipice by the violence of its professed adherents, who cloaked their selfish schemes of territorial and political aggrandizement under the mask of disinterested and zealous loyalty to the Crown, had drawn back in time to avoid the catastrophe which was destined to overtake it fourteen years later.

The domestic situation was now completely transformed ; the stormy career of the extremists had been arrested, and the peril of a reactionary *régime* for the moment passed away. The relations between the executive and the legislature now became harmonious, and they co-operated in the readjustment of the electoral machinery, and in the settlement of financial problems. Abroad Richelieu's administration inspired the Allies with such confidence that, at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle (1818), France was freed from the army of occupation. This was a great diplomatic triumph for the minister, but a group of Liberals were coming to the front, and their growing strength in the Chamber forced his retirement.

Decazes was placed at the head of the Government, which now leaned upon Liberal support. The most striking

1820 — measure of the new ministry was the abolition of the censorship and the emancipation of the press. and in the debate on freedom of religious discussion the Minister of Justice, de Serre, uttered memorable words: "What is man, that feeble and passionate being, that he should offer to the Almighty the help of his arm? Does he pretend to usurp His strength or to offer the aid of his own weakness? . . . The vanity of this presumption has often been shown. The centuries that are gone teach in bloody character its terrible results."<sup>1</sup> All political omens pointed in a favourable direction, and seemed to promise an enlightened administration, when a new turn was unexpectedly given to the course of events by the murder of the Duke of Berry in 1820. He was the younger son of the Comte d'Artois, the heir to the throne; and, as his brother was childless, his assassination involved the prospect that the elder branch of the Bourbons would become extinct. The crime was the work of a fanatic, Louvel, but it was immediately seized upon as a pretext for discrediting the Liberal ministry, and Decazes was overthrown. His fall from power changed the current of French history; it proved the starting-point of a reaction which gathered increasing strength until it provoked another revolution in 1830.

The moment was not yet ripe for the Ultra-Royalists to return to power, and the administration was therefore entrusted to Richelieu. The censorship of the press was restored, and an electoral law passed which suppressed secret ballot, narrowed the franchise, and gave a double vote to the landed interest. The result was a Royalist majority, which compelled Richelieu to retire, and placed in power Villèle, the leader of the Ultra-Royalists. His tenure of office lasted from 1821 to 1827, and afforded him an opportunity to carry out the programme whose main features we have already described. Yet while Villèle's policy was purely reactionary, his methods were more subtle and astute than those which had wrecked his party in 1816. He did not wish to alarm the country by an open manifesta-

<sup>1</sup> Cited, Lady Blennerhassett, "The Doctrinaires" in *Camb. Mod. Hist.* x. 59.



tion of his far-reaching designs. He curbed the headstrong impatience of his followers, who had learnt nothing and forgotten nothing, and who still believed it possible to ignore all the changes which had taken place in France since the Revolution. It is almost incredible that Villèle, a sober-minded administrator and skilful politician, should have attempted a task which upon the face of it might seem foredoomed to failure. But whether or not he misjudged the temper of the nation, he at any rate thought the experiment worth trying, and it must be confessed also that his adroit tactics came very near to realizing his calculations. In his campaign to undo the work of the Revolution, Villèle relied upon two powerful forces: the Church and material interests. With the aid of the first, he designed to utilize religious instruction as a vehicle for political propaganda, to uproot the memories of the Revolution, and to inculcate those principles of public morality which would serve as his justification for restoring the old order. With the aid of the second, he hoped to conciliate national opinion and to divert the energies of the people from political channels to the pursuit of material welfare. From the standpoint of the reactionaries the project was well conceived, and showed an intelligent grasp of the situation, while in the execution of it Villèle—adopting expediency as his guiding principle—withstood the temptation to employ hasty and ill-considered measures. He went to work cautiously and with moderation; step by step the ground was prepared, step by step the edifice was reared. The dangers which menaced the liberties of the French people during the period of Villèle's administration were greater, because more insidious, than those which confronted them in 1815, and only at the last moment did they extricate themselves from the meshes of the net which was being skilfully woven round them. Villèle's failure, indeed, was due not to the wisdom of his opponents, but to divisions in his own ranks. It was the rashness of his supporters which ruined their party when victory lay almost completely within their grasp.

The policy of the ministry, as we have said, was to regain for the Royalists their lost privileges by slow and imper-

1821-27 —  
Stages  
of the  
reaction.

ceptible stages ; accordingly the reaction was gradual. In 1822 the censorship of the press was strengthened, and the conduct of trials for offences against the press law was taken out of the hands of juries. This measure stifled public opinion. It invested the Government with the control of all anti-clerical and anti-aristocratic publications, and enabled it to suppress any writings which might serve to keep alive the revolutionary spirit. At the same time heavy tariffs were levied on imported commodities, to the satisfaction of the landed proprietors and wealthy manufacturers, and the direction of education was given over to the Church. While Villèle by the prudence of his financial and economic administration was thus consolidating the power which the rash act of a fanatic had conferred upon the Royalist party, Chateaubriand insisted that to make their position impregnable something more was needed. It was necessary to revive the glories of the Empire, to restore to the tarnished arms of France something of the brilliance imparted to them by the victories of Marengo, Austerlitz, and Jena. Even Napoleon had recognized that the surest method of repressing dissatisfaction at home was to achieve military success abroad, and one object of his wars had been to divert men's thoughts from the despotic character of his domestic rule. The French people must be compensated for the loss of their revolutionary heritage—equality and political rights—by the revival of French ascendancy on the Continent. Chateaubriand held the opinion that France, like Rome, would be content to sacrifice liberty for empire. With this conviction he forced Villèle's hand, and at the beginning of 1823 a French army was sent across the Pyrenees to the assistance of the Spanish king, whose subjects were in open revolt. This exploit reflected great credit upon the monarchy, and in the enthusiasm which it evoked it was not observed that France had been fighting on the side of absolutism, and that French troops had been employed to overthrow the forces of Liberalism.

Villèle's  
failure.

Chateaubriand now began to dream of gaining fresh laurels, and his thoughts turned towards the Rhine, but at this point Villèle drew back. He had been induced with

difficulty to give a reluctant assent to the war with Spain,<sup>1</sup> 1821-27  
 and though he had turned to good account the popularity which victory had brought the Government, he refused to embark upon the more ambitious projects which the fertile imagination of the great writer was already conceiving. Like Walpole, whom he resembled in his caution and in his reliance upon the fruits of a sound financial system to build up the strength of the ruling dynasty, Villèle was averse from war and foreign enterprises. If his policy was less spectacular than that of the war-party, it had at least greater elements of stability. Chateaubriand, whose sanguine temperament underrated the obstacles imposed by practical politics, was dismissed from the Cabinet, and the Government continued without ostentation its work of social and political retrogression. To strengthen his hold over the legislature, the minister created twenty-seven new peers in order to weaken the Liberal majority in the Upper Chamber, and he also carried through a septennial act by which Parliament was henceforth to sit for seven years; hitherto members of the Lower House had retired in annual batches of fifties. In this way the instrument which Liberalism had forged in its own interests—the parliamentary system—was now turned against it. The nation itself through its accredited representatives was to place the chains of political slavery round its neck; and law, the parent of liberty, was transformed into a vehicle of reaction. Secure for the moment of his parliamentary majority, and strengthened by the accession of Charles X. in 1824, Villèle could now bring forward the measures embodied in the Ultra-Royalist programme. The most important was the indemnification of the *émigrés*, who had gone into exile at the outbreak of the Revolution and had fought in the ranks of their country's enemies. The permanence of the French Revolution had been due primarily to the economic changes which accompanied it—the transference of estates from the large landowners to a multitude of peasant proprietors.

<sup>1</sup> "The invasion of Spain," wrote Canning, "was his [*i.e.* Chateaubriand's] work, not Villèle's": A. G. Stapleton, *George Canning and his Times* (1859), 553.



1821-27 — It was impossible after an interval of thirty years to dispossess the new owners of the soil, and an alternative device was adopted to satisfy the claims of the *émigrés* without disturbing the territorial settlement of 1790. The rate of interest on the National Debt was reduced from 5 to 4 per cent. (1825), and the economy thus effected enabled the Government to compensate the old nobility for the losses they had sustained by the sequestration of their possessions. This was followed by other measures relating to the foundation of religious bodies and the admission of Jesuits into France. But the open alliance between 'the altar and the throne,' and the growing pretensions of the priest-party, awakened the apprehensions of the nation, and the Chamber of Peers—the stronghold of Liberalism—began to display more determined powers of resistance. The attempt to alter the law of succession in favour of the eldest son, a proposal which foreshadowed the building up of great estates, was defeated; and a similar fate overtook the proposal that all publications must henceforth bear the royal imprimatur. The ministerial defeat was acclaimed with enthusiasm; and, when the King reviewed the National Guard, cries were raised from the ranks: "Down with the ministers." It was a portent of the future, but the ministry wilfully shut its eyes to its significance. Undaunted by the set-back which his policy had suffered, Villèle replied by disbanding the civic militia, re-establishing the censorship of the press, and nominating seventy-six new members for the Chamber of Peers in order to swamp the Liberal opposition. These measures constituted a departure from the course of prudent reaction which Villèle had hitherto followed. They were in reality signs of weakness and declining influence. Their violence, however, failed to overcome the hostility of the extremists, led by Chateaubriand, who regarded everything that Villèle did as coming from a tainted source. To some extent these men were actuated simply by personal motives, dislike of the minister, or resentment at their exclusion from office. But they rested their opposition primarily on grounds of principle; they vigorously denounced the pacific policy and back-stair

intrigues of Villèle, which in their eyes accounted for the tardy progress of the reactionary movement. They clamoured for more drastic methods, and in their exasperation were even induced to make common cause with the Liberals. Villèle resolved to stamp out the disaffected elements in his own camp, whose factious conduct was a more serious menace than the insignificant minority of Liberals, and appealed to the country. A majority adverse to the ministry was returned at the general election (1827), and Villèle, overthrown by the combined efforts of his opponents, resigned office. 1827-29

The successor of Villèle was Martignac, who attempted to conciliate public opinion by opportune concessions. He abolished the censorship of newspapers, and deprived the Jesuits of the power to give public instruction. The policy of compromise met, however, with no support either from the Liberals or from the Ultra-Royalists. There was no longer any room, in fact, for moderate men; Martignac, in trying to please both parties, pleased nobody, and so fell between two stools. The Liberals demanded that the basis of the franchise should be broadened. In the elections of 1827 they had only recruited their depleted forces with the aid of their most dangerous opponents, the Ultra-Royalists, whose sole desire at the moment had been to keep out ministerial candidates. They could enjoy, therefore, no real political security until they were rendered completely independent of assistance, which had only come to them by a singular caprice of fortune. Martignac professed to meet the Liberals half-way, and to soothe the administrative ambitions of the nation, by extending the franchise in provincial assemblies. His proposal was rejected by the extremists on both sides of the Chamber; it was not progressive enough for one party, it was too progressive for the other. Accordingly the two parties, while unable to agree on any constructive programme, again united to overthrow the ministry (1829). *Martignac.*

Matters had now reached a crisis. Charles X. found himself confronted by the dilemma which had faced Louis XVIII. thirteen years before, the claims of the present and *Charles X*

1829

the claims of the past. He could accept once and for all the rôle of a constitutional sovereign, and openly dissociate himself from the insidious attempts of his supporters to subvert the principles of the Revolution, or he could definitely throw in his lot with the Ultra-Royalists, and make a final bid to emancipate himself from the checks imposed upon his power by the Charter. The issues for which political parties had been contending in France since the Restoration were at last clearly defined: aristocratic pretensions and clerical domination on one side; equality and secularism on the other. The King did not hesitate long in making his choice. He had always been the mainstay of the reactionary party, a thorn in the side of his temporizing and prudent predecessor. "What can you expect?" Louis XVIII. had said, when the Comte d'Artois forced him in 1821 to accept Villèle as his minister; "he conspired against Louis XVI., he conspired against me, he will end by conspiring against himself." To a generation which held the theory of popular rights Charles X. now opposed the doctrine of divine right; to progress he opposed reaction; to the Charter he opposed the prerogatives of Louis XIV. "I told you," he said to Martignac, "there is no way of dealing with these men; it is time to call halt." The day for moderate counsels was past, and when the King summoned to the administration Polignac, an uncompromising partisan of the old order, he flung down the gage to the whole nation, and made the breach irreparable. His action proclaimed to the world that he had burnt his boats behind him. Henceforth professions of ministerial responsibility would no longer serve to shield the Crown or to disguise the fact that monarchy itself was now on trial. Men began significantly to recall the fate of James II. "There is no such thing as political experience," declared Wellington; "with the warning of James II. before him, Charles X. was setting up a government by priests, through priests, for priests."

*Overthrow  
of the  
Bourbon  
monarchy.*

Polignac announced his determination "to reorganize society, to give back the clergy their weight in State affairs, to create a powerful aristocracy, and to surround it with privileges." It was easier, however, to define his pro-



gramme than to carry it into execution ; and in the conduct of affairs the minister showed himself irresolute and vacillating. " He has made up his mind," it was wittily said, " but he does not know exactly to what." He fell back upon schemes of foreign aggrandizement in order to dazzle the eyes of the French nation with visions of glory and empire. An army was sent to Algiers, and its conquests laid the foundations of French dominion in North Africa. It is possible that this policy might have borne fruit. There were precedents in the history of the Revolution to justify the expectation that a vigorous offensive abroad would strengthen the hands of the executive in coping with the difficulties of the situation at home. But it was necessary not to strike before the iron was hot ; and Charles made the fatal error of choosing the wrong moment for taking action. The Liberal deputies had protested in an Address to the Crown against a ministry holding office when it was not backed by a parliamentary majority. The King interpreted the protest as an insult to the monarchy, and dissolved the Chambers (1830). In the elections which ensued the Government lost over fifty seats, and was now in a hopeless minority in the Assembly. This was the occasion appointed for the *coup d'état*. An article in the Charter empowered the King " to make the regulations and ordinances necessary for the execution of the laws, and for the safe-guarding of the State." Under the cover of this provision, Charles issued on July 25 three Ordinances : (1) setting aside the recent elections as null and void, and summoning a new Chamber ; (2) narrowing the franchise ; and (3) silencing the press. The next day Paris, at the instigation of the journalists, broke out in revolt and erected barricades. While the signal for insurrection was given by journalists, the movement itself was organized by republicans, who had prepared for the day of revolution by establishing secret societies among the population of Paris. The ministry, taken by complete surprise, was unable to coerce the capital into submission, and a provisional Government was set up at the Hôtel de Ville under the famous revolutionary leader, Lafayette. The King now sought to revoke the Ordinances,

1830 — but it was too late ; and, after a futile attempt to save his dynasty by abdicating in favour of his grandson, he passed into exile.

*Signifi-  
cance of the  
Revolution  
of 1830.*

The Revolution of 1830 was an event of great significance in the history of France. On the surface it appeared to involve no considerable changes. Although the insurrection was planned and carried through by democrats, the latter found themselves thwarted in the objects for which they had fought in the streets of Paris. The elder line of the Bourbon House was set aside, but its place was supplied by the Orleans branch. Despite the change of dynasty, the monarchy itself was not overthrown, thanks to the skill with which the politicians manœuvred the course of events. The provisional Government, installed in the Hôtel de Ville, was composed of republicans ; and in their eyes the Revolution was intended as an act of defiance not only to the Bourbons, but to the European Powers who had forced upon them the national humiliation of 1815. The situation, however, was complicated by the fact that the very circumstances ultimately responsible for the downfall of the Bourbon monarchy made it impossible to establish a republic in its stead. A French republic in 1830 would have been interpreted as a challenge to Europe ; and with the memories of 1789 still fresh in their minds, the Allies would have taken immediate steps to ward off the threatened danger. Thus the republicans found their hands tied ; and, while registering in the Chamber their protest against the monarchical system, they were unable to win any effective support in the country. Under these circumstances the Liberal deputies were able to arrogate to themselves the power of shaping the destinies of France, and they devised a compromise which, in default of an alternative solution, gained the acquiescence of the democrats. The Crown was offered to Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, who was a Bourbon, but had fought in the ranks of the revolutionaries at Jemmapes. This conciliated democratic opinion, which was flattered by the deference which the new King ostentatiously paid to its prejudices, while it also served to allay the apprehensions of the European Powers. Moreover, not only did the in-



1830  
—  
surrection of 1830 fail to destroy the monarchy, but the modifications effected in the Constitution were insignificant. They hardly made even a pretence at giving substance to the lip-professions of the politicians in favour of popular sovereignty. The King was deprived of the power conferred by Article 14 of the Charter to make ordinances in exceptional emergencies, and the right to initiate legislation was confided to the Chambers; Catholicism ceased to be the established religion, and press restrictions were abolished. But the crying need for the extension of the suffrage, which was confined to a mere fraction of the population—28 millions being represented by 100,000 electors—met with no adequate response, and the people were excluded from sharing in a government which their efforts alone had made possible.

None the less, it would be a mistake to minimize the importance of the Revolution, even while we avoid any exaggerated emphasis upon its popular character. It resembled the English Revolution to the extent that its significance was negative rather than positive. Alike in 1688 and in 1830 no real advance was made in the direction of democracy, since the political changes were unaccompanied by parliamentary and economic reforms, without which democracy must remain a transparent fiction. But in England and in France the divine right of the nation was henceforth substituted for the divine right of kings. There could be no question that Louis Philippe, like William III., ruled by the will of the people; and, in any struggle between the King and the nation, the latter was bound to prevail. "The King will respect our rights, for it is of us that he will hold his own." Once and for all, France rejected the principle established at the Vienna Congress—the principle of 'Legitimacy.' The excesses of Charles X. completely obscured the great benefits which the early years of Bourbon administration had conferred upon France—in the words of Decazes: "The establishment of the constitutional regime; the liberation of the territory [from an army of occupation]; the liquidation of the enormous debt which the culpable folly of the Hundred Days had imposed on France; the re-

*The divine  
right of the  
people.*

1830 — establishment of peace and security." The downfall of the Bourbon dynasty involved also the final rejection of the Ultra-Royalist programme. Whatever political power had been acquired by the clerical and aristocratic factions was now extinguished. In short, the Revolution of 1830 was the complement of the Revolution of 1789; for the future, the achievements of the revolutionary spirit—the principles of equality, secularism, and constitutional liberty—rested on secure foundations. The Charter was no longer a royal concession extorted from the weakness of the Crown and revocable at will; it had become the inalienable birthright of the nation.

The  
Orleans  
monarchy  
(1830-48).

The Orleans dynasty governed France for eighteen years. The period is important for the development of French institutions and the working of the representative system; but while the fortunes of parliamentary warfare swayed now to one side, now to another, the issues at stake were widely different from those which had torn the country asunder in the days of the Bourbon regime. The political and social fabric of the Revolution was no longer endangered by men of the stamp of Villèle or Polignac, and the various elements in the Assembly contended for power, rather than for principle. The protagonists of the struggle were Guizot, the leader of the Conservative party, and Thiers, the leader of the Liberal party. Both alike accepted the July monarchy, and were pledged to defend the existing form of government in all its integrity against the partisans of the legitimate monarchy on the one hand, and against republicans on the other. It is difficult to define their views with precision, since each was compelled by the exigencies of the parliamentary situation to trim his sails and seek the co-operation of those with whom they were fundamentally at variance. Guizot made overtures to the clerical interests. Thiers held compromising relations with the Radical party. Neither recognized that, in coquetting with their common enemies, they were undermining their own position and that of the monarchy itself. Their foreign policy was marked by the same indecisive and temporizing qualities. The diplomacy of Guizot rested on an *entente cordiale* with

England, a compact between the two Liberal Powers of Western Europe against the three Eastern and reactionary Powers; yet in 1846 he wilfully severed the alliance in order to establish French predominance in the Spanish peninsula. Thiers favoured a vigorous offensive abroad and opposed the *entente cordiale*; but while reviving the traditions of the Empire, his policy wore largely the appearance of a device to cultivate popularity and oust his opponents from office. The real trend of events which culminated in the overthrow of Louis Philippe must be sought for, not in the details of these party conflicts, but in the domain of foreign policy and in the gradual democratic awakening. The Revolution of 1848 came as a surprise to both parliamentary leaders, who were so preoccupied with the differences which divided them that they had lost all touch with reality. The ease with which the Revolution was accomplished is explicable only on the assumption that the Government and the official Opposition had grown completely insensible to the forces which were silently working outside the parliamentary arena for their destruction. It is necessary to give some account of these forces in order to grasp the inner significance of the period which lies before us.

The fundamental cause of Louis Philippe's unpopularity was his refusal to accommodate himself to the prejudices of the French people, to shape his diplomacy on lines acceptable to the nation at large. The settlement of 1815 had left behind it humiliating memories; and ultimately, therefore, the strength of the Orleans dynasty would depend on the extent to which it gratified the national pride by the vigour of its foreign enterprises. On two occasions it was furnished with an opportunity to satisfy the French yearning for glory; it was the unpardonable offence of the King that, on each occasion, he stood between the nation and the satisfaction of its desires. The first opportunity came at the moment of his accession to the throne. Paris in 1830, as in 1789 and again in 1848, was the storm-centre of Europe; revolutionary outbreaks in the French capital convulsed every State and rocked every throne on the Continent. Hence the downfall of the Bourbons was the signal for

Cause of  
Louis  
Philippe's  
unpopu-  
larity.



1830 — movements which had long been maturing in other countries to assert themselves. Belgium declared her independence of Holland; Poland broke out in revolt against Russia; even Germany and Italy witnessed faint stirrings of national sentiment.<sup>1</sup> The fate of these movements seemed to depend upon the part which France would play. The King was called upon to make a momentous decision whether he would remain passive or give the lead to all the revolutionary elements of disaffection. The destinies of the Orleans House hung in the balance; and, while the prudent policy of Louis Philippe may have preserved his dynasty for eighteen years, it created an irreparable breach between the throne and the people, which the passage of time served only to widen.

*Foreign  
policy:  
(1) 1830.*

The French people demanded that the monarchy should intervene on behalf of the oppressed nationalities. They were hostile to the settlement of 1815 which had wounded so deeply their national pride, and they still clung to the intoxicating memories of the Napoleonic Empire. Moreover, the populace of Paris, after passing through a period of chastened emotions, had suddenly burst out into a flood of insurgent passions; and their uncontrollable impulses not only swept away a dynasty, they also awakened the old missionary ardour which a generation before had sought to kindle the flames of revolution throughout the world. History was repeating itself; and burning with zeal for republican propaganda, France—as in the days of the Convention—was prepared to issue a challenge to the monarchical system and bid subjects everywhere rise up against despotism. It is hardly profitable to speculate what would have been the outcome, if Louis Philippe had given free rein to the popular passions. The result could scarcely have been other than disastrous, for the three Eastern Powers—Russia, Prussia, and Austria—would have immediately drawn together in a coalition against France. It is also unlikely that the French people, after the exhaustion of the Napoleonic Wars, and lacking the stimulus which had enabled them to drive back the invaders of their soil in

<sup>1</sup> See below, Chapters II., V., and VII.

1793, would have been able to offer effective resistance. In 1840  
 any case, Louis Philippe steadfastly refused to embroil  
 himself with Europe, and give the reactionary Powers a  
 pretext for intervening in the domestic affairs of France.  
 He was determined at all costs to avoid war, or, as he said,  
 "to unmuzzle the tiger." In spite of the sympathy of the  
 French people, he gave no countenance to the insurrections  
 in Poland and Italy, and he declined the crown of Belgium  
 for his son. His diplomacy was skilful, because it reconciled  
 continental Governments to the July monarchy, and  
 quenched the danger of a European conflagration, but its  
 finesse was lost upon the nation, which never forgave the  
 disillusion it had suffered.

In 1840 the international situation afforded a second (2) 1840.  
 opportunity to the Orleans monarchy to abandon its pacific  
 policy and identify itself unreservedly with the national  
 aspirations. The military achievements of Mehemet Ali,  
 the Pasha of Egypt, had aroused the unbounded enthusiasm  
 of the French people, who were carried away by the idea that  
 upon his shoulders had fallen the mantle of Napoleon. The  
 King for the moment wavered, and to satisfy popular clamour  
 placed at the head of the ministry Thiers, who had pledged  
 himself to champion the cause of Mehemet Ali "as a matter  
 of great patriotic interest, a great question of the national  
 honour." But Louis Philippe, who never relaxed control  
 of foreign policy, recognized that the hostile preparations  
 of Thiers involved the prospect of a European war, for the  
 Powers had called upon the Pasha of Egypt to renounce his  
 ambitious designs upon Turkish territory. After a few  
 months, when the popular agitation had subsided, Thiers  
 was dismissed. Guizot was summoned to power and  
 remained in office till the Revolution. In his tortuous  
 diplomacy the nation found little occasion for pride or  
 satisfaction: Lamartine summed up the situation in a  
 telling phrase, *La France s'ennuyait*; and from the boredom  
 of the French people sprang the Revolution.

While Louis Philippe fought his subjects single-handed *Internal*  
 on matters of foreign policy, imposing an unpopular peace *policy.*  
 upon a nation in love with glory, his conduct of internal

1830-48 — affairs was equally not calculated to conciliate public opinion. The foundations of the monarchy crumbled silently away beneath his feet, until the ease with which the King was overthrown was a revelation even to his enemies. Chateaubriand and Thiers alike had recognized that military splendour abroad was necessary to allay the discontent occasioned by repressive action at home. But Louis Philippe, and his minister Guizot, thought it possible to deprive the nation of political rights, while refusing it compensation in other directions. Guizot described his 'system' as "resistance at home to the revolutionary movement, and such moderation abroad as enforces respect for existing treaties, while avoiding all interference in the affairs of other States." It was a fatal mistake, however, to suppose that the 'revolutionary movement' could be held in check by a policy of 'resistance': the policy of repression is generally futile unless it meets with popular approval, and is apt to recoil upon those who have recourse to it. In France popular approval was withheld from the Government owing to its foreign policy, and 'resistance' only served to strengthen the opposition. Accordingly, we have now to examine those progressive tendencies, comprehended in the term 'revolutionary movement,' which were undermining the stability of the monarchical system.

The  
middle-  
class  
monarchy.

The basis of Louis Philippe's throne was the middle classes (the *bourgeoisie*), who possessed the monopoly of power, and with whose aid he ruled France from 1830 to 1848. They had wrested the fruits of victory out of the hands of the populace which had borne the heat of the struggle, and had established the July monarchy in order to consolidate their position in the community as the governing class. They alone enjoyed the exercise of political rights, since the franchise was limited to those who paid 200 francs a year in taxes, and a seat in Parliament to those who paid 500 francs. Hence they were enabled to determine the composition of the Chambers and impose their will upon the whole country. Wrapped up in the pursuit of wealth, they engrossed public offices and devoted themselves to material interests. In these circumstances the Assembly



had no claim to be regarded as representative of the nation ; 1830-48  
 and it exposed its weakness still further by barren party  
 conflicts, which laid bare the futility of its discussions. It  
 was, indeed, nothing but the empty shell of a parliamentary  
 system, and could not fail to excite derision at a time when  
 social and economic questions were rapidly coming to the  
 front. The dawning consciousness that economic issues *Social*  
 are the controlling factors in society, and that true demo- *problems.*  
 cracy must rest on economic as well as on political founda-  
 tions, marked in itself an epoch. It also hastened the  
 collapse of a regime, whose policy abroad and at home was  
 based on timid 'resistance' to all political innovations.  
 The grievances of the working-classes attracted the attention  
 of republicans, whose energies in the past had been absorbed  
 in premature outbreaks and vain appeals to revolutionary  
 traditions ; accordingly, they began to concentrate upon  
 social and parliamentary reform as the starting-point of  
 the new order. The process of transformation in the  
 republican party was accelerated by the tardy recognition  
 that its former methods of crude violence only served to  
 alienate the mass of the nation. The beginnings of Socialism  
 date from this period, and if only a few were prepared to  
 accept Proudhon's maxim, " property is theft," there were  
 many who approved of Louis Blanc's principle, " the right  
 to work." As early as 1834 the workmen of Lyons had  
 taken up arms in defence of their trade unions, whose  
 existence was menaced by a law directed against industrial  
 associations. A few years later (1842), a contemporary  
 remarked : " The time for purely political movements in  
 France is past, the coming revolution cannot but be a social  
 revolution." To all this seething mass of political and social  
 unrest the Government, content to steer its course midway  
 between reaction and revolution, and devoid of any con-  
 structive programme, presented an impenetrable front.  
 Guizot held that concession would be interpreted as a sign  
 of surrender, and even if he had been willing to meet the cry  
 for democratic reform his dependence upon the capitalists  
 tied his hands. Thus in the eyes of the French nation the  
 July monarchy ceased to justify itself. It did not prevent

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the isolation of France in the councils of Europe, nor spare her the shame of diplomatic humiliations. At home it stood aloof from the progressive elements in the country, identifying itself with a parliamentary majority whose political preponderance was illusory since it was not truly representative.

'The King  
shall reign,  
not rule.'

Its inherent weakness was revealed in the manner of its overthrow, which came with startling suddenness. Louis Philippe was not content to reign without ruling, to enjoy the semblance of power without its reality. From the outset of his reign, he had opposed a strenuous resistance to the efforts of the Conservative leaders to establish a virtual dictatorship over the monarchy as the price of their assistance in dethroning Charles X. While keeping up the appearance of parliamentary government, and the fiction of ministerial responsibility, he had no intention of being a *roi fainéant*, or resigning his authority to "these princes of the tribune," as a contemporary called them, "these great vassals of the representative regime, who believed that they had a prescriptive right to direct the affairs of the country." On more than one occasion the dissensions between the King and his ministers had provoked an open rupture, and in 1837 he had sacrificed Guizot for Molé, an opportunist in policy, and a more compliant instrument, whom he maintained in office for two years in face of parliamentary opposition. In particular he refused to relax his tenacious grasp over foreign policy, and his firmness alone kept the warlike instincts of the nation in check, resolved as he was "to crush twelve Chambers rather than to make war." Accordingly Thiers, who was enamoured of the Napoleonic traditions and mortified by his exclusion from power, attacked the personal influence exercised by the sovereign as a violation of constitutional practice. Frustrated in his designs by the King, and failing to make headway in the Chamber, he began to draw near to the republican party, and to support the demand for electoral reform. Throughout the country a series of banquets was held to stir up public opinion and bring pressure to bear upon the Government. In the speech from the throne, Guizot denounced the "blind and hostile" passions of the reformers, who



resolved upon a demonstration to protest against the reproach levelled at their propaganda. At the last moment, however, the Opposition leaders, dreading to precipitate the crisis, stayed their hand and revoked the announcement. Their action was taken too late. On February 22, 1848, the day appointed for the demonstration, the democracy of Paris poured into the streets; and the National Guard, called upon to maintain order, openly betrayed its sympathy with the demonstrators. Deprived at this critical juncture of the force upon which it relied, the hollowness of the July monarchy was made transparent to the republican leaders, who promptly seized the occasion to turn a demonstration against an unpopular minister into a revolution against the monarchy. After a vain effort to conciliate the insurgents by dismissing Guizot and summoning Thiers to power, Louis Philippe abdicated the throne. A provisional Government was set up under Lamartine, and for the second time a Republic was established in France.

The Revolution of 1848 naturally invites comparison with the earlier movements engineered against Louis XVI. and Charles X. Speaking generally, we may say that the first Revolution was directed against arbitrary monarchy, the second against aristocratic privilege, and the third against middle-class government: in other words, legal equality was established in 1789, social equality in 1830, and political equality in 1848. The ascendancy of the *bourgeoisie* in the government of France was destroyed by the institution of manhood suffrage; and political power was now extended to the people. The July monarchy had prided itself on being the just mean (*juste milieu*) between reaction and revolution, the excesses of aristocracy and the extravagances of democracy; but, poised as it was in an unstable equilibrium, its fall was from the first only a question of time. It became the object of attack on every side, and all the forces in the country worked to its detriment. The pillars of the monarchy, as we have seen, were the middle classes, but though their authority rested on a legal basis, namely, the franchise, they enjoyed no moral or intellectual ascendancy over the rest of the community.

1848

They possessed no historical claims to be the governing class—claims which might have reconciled France to their pretensions—and, as the representatives of wealth and material power, they excited the animosity of those in whose eyes the existing social and economic order was based upon injustice. Thus the support of the *bourgeoisie* was in the long run a source of weakness rather than of strength, and Louis Philippe committed a fatal mistake in not broadening the basis of his rule. The error was the more vital, since even the support rendered him was lukewarm and precarious. Although their interests were wrapped up in the stability of the monarchy, the middle classes were really sunk in apathy and lassitude; they had reconciled themselves with reluctance to the pacific policy of the Government, and they ceased to take active interest in the barren debates of their representatives in Parliament. As matters were, Louis Philippe could only hope to encounter successfully the difficulties of his situation by turning away the thoughts of the French people in other directions; but this he signally failed to do. It was an axiom of his policy to maintain the peace of Europe, and the fact that his aim was achieved without any sacrifice of the national dignity, did not appease the susceptibilities of his subjects. He was obnoxious to the country because he disappointed its ambitions; France needed once again to be purified by fire in order to learn the blessings of peace with honour.

'The Right  
to Work.'

The Revolution of 1848 constituted an epoch in the history of political democracy because the extension of the suffrage transferred power from the middle classes to the community at large. It was also an epoch in the history of economic democracy because it witnessed a remarkable, though tentative, experiment in Socialism. The populace of Paris had not overthrown the monarchy merely in order to establish a republic.

"For forms of government let fools contest;  
Whate'er is best administered, is best."

"There is no form of government," said Louis Blanc, "which may not be used as a weapon against the interests of the

community. . . . The chief object to be aimed at is to make him that works enjoy the fruit of his work, to restore to the dignity of human nature those whom the excess of poverty degrades ; to enlighten those whose intelligence, from want of education, is but a dim vacillating lamp in the midst of darkness ; in one word, to enfranchise the people, by endeavouring to abolish this double slavery—ignorance and misery.”<sup>1</sup> The watchword of the Revolution was “the right to work,” and Louis Blanc’s *Organisation du Travail* (published 1839) was the gospel of 1848, just as the *Contrat Social* of Rousseau was the gospel of 1789. The irony of events, however, associated Louis Blanc’s name with an experiment of which he really disapproved. He did not advocate national workshops, but co-operative workshops which the State was to furnish with the preliminary capital, while leaving the control of the industry in the hands of the workmen themselves. This is not State-Socialism, but a form of Industrial Syndicalism, where production is organized on the basis of self-governing workshops which appoint their own officials, and are linked together with other industrial groups. One of the first acts of the Republic was to set up a “Labour Parliament” at the Luxemburg under Louis Blanc, and the decree which established it is worthy of note :

“Considering that the Revolution made by the people ought to be made *for* them ;

“That it is high time to put an end to the iniquitous and protracted sufferings of workmen ;

“That the labour question is one of supreme importance. . . .

“A permanent Commission shall be formed for the express purpose of inquiring into the social condition of the operatives. . . .”<sup>2</sup>

While the Commission was engaged in its deliberations—planning labour exchanges, national insurance, model lodging-houses, agricultural colonies, and a ten-hours’ working day—the Government embarked independently

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<sup>1</sup> Louis Blanc, *Organisation du Travail*, ed. J. A. R. Marriott (1913), p. lix.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. lxii



1848-52 — upon the experiment of national workshops. The experiment was a portent of extreme significance, but being hastily conceived and ill-managed it ended at the time in disastrous failure. The *ateliers nationaux* attracted no less than 120,000 workmen from all parts of France. The Government, unable to employ them in productive or even unproductive labour, provided them with a scanty dole. "The national workshops," wrote Louis Blanc, "were nothing more than a rabble of paupers whom it was enough to feed from the want of knowing how to employ them. . . . As the kind of labour in these workshops was utterly unproductive and absurd, besides being such as the greater part of them were utterly unaccustomed to, the action of the State was simply squandering the public funds; its money a premium upon idleness; its wages alms in disguise."<sup>1</sup> The situation rapidly became a menace to the public order, and the workshops were abolished. The disappointed hopes of the labouring classes provoked them into armed insurrection (June 1848), and a terrible struggle took place in the streets of Paris. After four days the sanguinary conflict ended in a victory for the authorities, and with it ended also the dream of a social democracy.

✓  
The Second  
Empire.

It is the fatal vice of revolutions that one can never foretell their course or predict their issues. In 1848, as in 1789, those who initiated the movement planned one thing; circumstance gave birth to another. On each occasion an attempt was made to establish the political sovereignty of the people; each time the result was to call into existence a Napoleonic empire. The result of the first general election held upon the basis of universal suffrage aroused astonishment in Europe, for the conservatism of democracy had not yet become a commonplace; in the main men of moderate opinions were returned to Parliament. Among the members was Louis Napoleon, nephew of the great Emperor, who was also elected President, December 1848, by over five million votes. Three years later the Republic was overthrown by a *coup d'État*, and the Empire was erected the following year by a plebiscite of nearly

<sup>1</sup> Louis Blanc, *Organisation du Travail*, ed. J. A. R. Marriott (1913), p. lxxxiii.

eight million votes. Thus the Second Republic shared the fate of the First ; its supporters were divided among themselves, and it had earned the hatred of the democrats by its ruthless repression of the social movement. A generation after the fall of the First Empire the French people—intimidated by a system of terrorism and the proscription of republican leaders, and carried away by the glamour of Napoleon's name—resigned its sovereignty into the hands of one man, and again reverted to an imperial regime. Another effort was to be made to institute a form of government which should combine stability at home with the pursuit of glory abroad. We have now to examine the programme of the Second Empire and to see how it worked out in practice. This programme, like the Empire itself, was the outgrowth of the Napoleonic legend.

The circumstances which brought Louis Napoleon to the throne of France afford a remarkable illustration of the influence exerted by personality upon History. The personality of Napoleon I. had dominated the imagination of Frenchmen during his lifetime, it continued to dominate their imagination after his death, and it enabled his nephew—with no advantages to recommend him to the nation beyond the possession of a great name—to exploit this accident of birth to the full. It is always difficult for the *διάδοχοι*, the generals of Alexander, to occupy the seat of Alexander himself ; and the successors of Napoleon, making no attempt to imitate their great model, were unable to fill the void which his loss created in the hearts of the French people. The restored monarchy awakened no enthusiasm in the nation at large, and the benefits which it conferred upon France in repairing the destructive ravages of the revolutionary wars did not blunt the edge of her hostility. The *bourgeois régime*, despite its services to the cause of peace, equally failed to establish a firm foothold in the country, and its sombre and materialistic background only threw into sharper relief the glorious achievements of the past. This was the seed-time, the period of the Napoleonic cult, when the thoughts of Frenchmen turned to the solitary figure in St. Helena, grieving for the harsh destiny which

1848-52

*Growth  
of the  
Napoleonic  
Legend.*

1848-52 — had brought him low. They interpreted his career not with the balanced judgment of cold critical reason, but with the warm generous sympathy which transfigures what it cannot approve. They ignored or forgave the *coups d'Etat* by which he climbed to power ; they forgot also the contrast between his professions of liberty and an arbitrary and oppressive regime ; they remembered only the national hero and the Treaties of 1815.

The new  
reading of  
Napoleon's  
history.

The Napoleonic legend (*Légende Napoléonienne*) gave a new reading to the history of Napoleon. Even while he yet lived, it enabled him to pose as the apostle of Liberal opinions, the heir of the Revolution, who symbolized in his person the ideas of 1789. It exhibited him in the light of a saviour of society, who had conceived for Europe the vision of a golden age ripe with the promise of liberty and peace, a vision darkened all too soon by an intractable fate which postponed the accomplishment of his designs and launched him upon a sea of blood. The eager acceptance of this legend was not due to the credulity of the people, it was in reality a striking testimony to the almost pathetic yearning of the nation to honour the memory of its greatest ruler. And of all who believed in the Napoleonic traditions none did so more implicitly than Louis Napoleon. In his exile he had meditated deeply on *Les Idées Napoléoniennes*, which he expounded in his writings, and he looked upon himself as appointed by destiny to assume the mantle of his namesake. "The name Napoleon," proclaimed the President of the Republic in 1849, "stands within for order and the welfare of the people ; without, for the national dignity." The message summed up in brief the programme of the Second Empire.

The pro-  
gramme of  
the Second  
Empire.

"The reconciliation of order with liberty"—in other words, the political education of the people—constituted nominally the design and purpose of Napoleon III.'s domestic policy. The first condition of a stable government is full recognition of its authority ; a nation must learn to obey before it can learn to be free. "Order precedes liberty in historical sequence," for license is not liberty but the negation of liberty. On this ground it was held necessary to



adjourn the blessings of freedom, as Napoleon I. had done,<sup>1</sup> in order that the community might acquire respect for authority and be schooled to obedience. "France is a great democracy which needs discipline," said a contemporary, "and no element is so fitted to represent it as the Napoleonic." Under cover of this pretext Louis Napoleon began his career as Emperor by extinguishing all the political rights of the nation, professing his intention to curtail his power by gradual stages, and admit the people into partnership. Liberty, he promised, would crown the edifice.<sup>2</sup> In the last years of his reign Napoleon III. undoubtedly did relax his autocracy to some extent, but his grudging concessions were prompted by the desire to conciliate Liberal opinion and not because he thought the time now ripe. The characteristics of the imperial regime can best be illustrated by giving some account of the constitution of the Empire during the period of personal sovereignty, and by indicating the nature of the modifications introduced in later years.

(1) The Emperor comprised in his person all the powers of the Executive, having command of the army and navy, deciding peace or war, and initiating and administering the laws. He stood at the head of a vast centralized administrative system, which covered every part of France and concentrated in his hands enormous executive authority. As in America to-day, there was no cabinet government. The ministers had no seat in the Legislature, and did not reflect its opinions, nor were they a homogeneous body sharing collective responsibility and affording each other mutual support. Independent of parliamentary control, they were individually responsible to the Emperor, and dependent upon him alone for their position; hence they were entirely under his direction. Even in the provinces all vestiges of self-government were completely effaced: power was vested in the prefects, who were the nominees of the Emperor and carried out his will; and all the municipal officers, including the mayor, were nominated and not elected. An arbitrary police-system controlled the press and restricted

1852-70

*The constitution of the Empire: (1) The Executive.*

<sup>1</sup> Louis Napoléon Bonaparte, *Des Idées Napoléoniennes* (ed. 1860), 132, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. xi.

1852-70 — the liberty of the individual ; it was dangerous to criticize the Government, and the judicial system itself was converted into an instrument of despotism. (2) The Legislature was composed of three bodies : the Legislative Body, the Council, and the Senate. The Legislative Body was elected on the basis of manhood suffrage, but every obstacle was placed in the way of the free choice of the electors, and every conceivable pressure was brought to bear in favour of ministerial candidates. Apart, however, from electoral anomalies and perversions, the Chamber had not a shadow of power or independence ; it could neither initiate laws, nor even amend bills introduced by the Government. The president was chosen by the Emperor ; the session lasted only three months in the year ; and the budget was voted *en bloc*. The Council of State, intended in the words of the Constitution as a " body of practical men who could dispense with oratorical display," was allowed a larger share in legislation, and it prepared measures for the Chamber ; but its president also was appointed by the Emperor. The Senate, whose members were all nominees of the Emperor, consisted mainly of those who had held high official rank ; its function was to frame legislative proposals, to interpret the Constitution, and safeguard it against infringement.<sup>1</sup> Thus Napoleon III. was the absolute ruler of France. Technically his power was based upon the will of the people as expressed in a plebiscite ; actually it rested upon the army. In short, the fundamental idea underlying the Napoleonic regime was that of inverted democracy, Cæsarism founded upon a popular basis.

The  
Liberal  
Empire.

After 1860 Napoleon, as we have said, was compelled by degrees to limit his autocracy and establish the Liberal Empire (1860-1870). To restore to the French people the political rights of which he had deprived them had always been the Emperor's professed intention ; in later years he awoke to the perception that there was an imperative need to give substance to his promises. In imitation of the precedent set by Napoleon I., he had won over to his side the Catholics, rewarding their allegiance with the control of

<sup>1</sup> A. Thomas, " Napoleon " in *Camb. Mod. Hist.* xi. cc. 10 and 17.

education, and using religious instruction as a vehicle to disseminate ideas inculcating docility and subordination to authority. But in 1859 he exasperated his Catholic supporters by joining Piedmont in a war against Austria. The progress of the Italian movement, as is elsewhere described,<sup>1</sup> threatened with extinction the temporal power of the Papacy, and not unnaturally it raised a storm of opposition among the French Clericals. At the same time he excited the animosity of the manufacturers. Napoleon was a free-trader, and in 1860 he signed a treaty of commerce with England which lowered the duties on imported commodities. He had a sincere desire to promote the welfare of the working classes, and entertained also the conviction that free trade would be the harbinger of peace and goodwill among nations, but his action drew down upon him the hostility of the commercial classes. The Emperor thus found himself in collision with two powerful sections of the community, whose vested interests he had compromised by his policy—the Clericals and the Protectionists; and it became incumbent upon him therefore to appeal for support in other directions. His counsellors also pressed upon him the advisability of sharing his power in order to lighten the load of responsibility which a ruler must shoulder who—like George III.—attempts to be ‘his own unadvised minister.’ The first step towards parliamentary government was taken in 1860, when the Senate and the Legislative Body were allowed once a year to debate, and criticize, the policy laid before them in the speech from the throne; and the concession was coupled with a decree that debates in Parliament should henceforth be fully reported. In 1861 Napoleon empowered the Assembly to vote on separate items of the budget, and in 1867 to interpellate the ministers; the following year he freed the press from many of its restrictions, and permitted the holding of public meetings. But all these measures, extorted as they were from the weakness of the Emperor by the growing hostility of the nation, failed to conciliate public opinion; indeed they were seized upon by the adversaries of the Government as instru-

1852-70

<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, Chapter V



1852-70 — ments for its overthrow. The autocracy of Napoleon broke down under the weight of the combined opposition offered by all the disaffected elements in the country, the Legitimists, the Orleanists, the Liberals, the Republicans, the Catholics, and the Protectionists, who were now all united to wrest from the Emperor fresh constitutional guarantees.

✓  
Social and  
economic  
policy of  
the Second  
Empire.

As an administrator, Napoleon III. revived the traditions of the Enlightened Despots, who governed Europe in the eighteenth century; he was 'the first servant of the State,' the successor of Joseph II. or of Frederick the Great, not of Louis XIV. "The Napoleonic idea," he wrote, "is not one of war, but a social, industrial, commercial, humanitarian idea."<sup>1</sup> The social and economic policy of the Empire was intended to compensate France for the loss of her political rights, and the welfare of the nation was placed in the foreground of the imperial programme. "The triumph of Christianity abolished slavery, the triumph of the French Revolution abolished serfdom, the triumph of democracy will abolish pauperism." Napoleon displayed a genuine regard for the poor and a real desire to improve the condition of the people; even before his accession to power his philanthropic sympathies had found expression in a book on the *Extinction of Pauperism*. Under his energetic direction France made great strides, and an immense impetus was given to every kind of industrial and commercial activity. Credit was fostered by two important institutions: the *Crédit foncier*, which made advances on property, and the *Crédit mobilier*, which financed large undertakings; while the Bank of France set up branches throughout the country. At the same time the railway system was greatly developed, and the postal and telegraphic services established on a proper basis. Thus side by side with the accumulation of capital—the arteries of industry—went improved facilities in communication—the arteries of commerce. As a result, manufactures rapidly progressed, inventions multiplied, and production doubled itself within twenty years. The Great Exhibition of 1855 witnessed to the world the striking transformation which was taking place in the industrial

<sup>1</sup> *Des Idées Napoléoniennes*, 151.

life of France. Still we must remember that the real criterion of national prosperity is not the amount of wealth in a country, but the manner of its distribution. The concentration of wealth in the hands of the few may occasion grave injury to the community as a whole ; and therefore the only sound test of economic progress is the condition of the working classes, upon whose physical and material well-being the foundations of society must ultimately rest. Now it is true that in ten years (1850-1860) wages rose from 10 to 40 per cent., according to the various occupations, but 'real' wages apparently fell, for the increase in the cost of living was no less than 50 per cent. The Government, to its credit, was not indifferent to social questions, although its efforts at amelioration were palliatives rather than remedies. In Paris the butchers' gild was deprived of its monopoly, and a compensation fund was formed to enable bakers always to sell cheap bread to the poor. Money was provided out of public funds for the improvement of workmen's dwellings ; benefit societies were fostered, though trade unions were discouraged ; almshouses were erected ; and in times of distress relief funds were officially organized. In addition the Government itself became a great employer of labour, inaugurating great public works in order to prevent unemployment and to improve the appearance of the large towns. Paris especially was transformed out of all recognition, and its boulevards and buildings created the magnificent city of to-day.

We have now to deal with the foreign policy of the Empire, for we would emphasize the fact that the history of France in the nineteenth century cannot be understood by dwelling exclusively upon her internal development. The condition of affairs abroad reacted upon the situation at home, and the stability of the Government depended upon forces which to a large extent were beyond its control. Though he proclaimed that *L'Empire, c'est la paix*, Napoleon recognized the importance of indulging the national pride by adopting a resolute and vigorous attitude in his relations with other countries ; yet whether he had any coherent design mapped out in his mind may be doubted. " He was

1852-70

*The foreign  
policy of  
the Empire.*



1852-70 — vaguely aware," as Bismarck said, "that he needed a war," for he confessed his determination never to fall, as Louis Philippe had done, by clinging at all costs to an ultra-pacific policy. "He knew well," he told the English ambassador, "that the instincts of France were military and domineering, and that he was resolved to gratify them." But he was obliged to move with circumspection lest an act of unprovoked aggression should unite Europe in arms against him, while the nation itself would be terrified if brought suddenly to the brink of Armageddon. The traditions of the First Empire were still fresh in the memories of men, and it was necessary to reassure the world that Napoleon III. had no intention to plunge the Continent once more into a deluge of blood. His anomalous position thus carried with it the seeds of its own destruction. His inmost desire was peace, in order to reconcile Europe to his pretensions, and to realize his vast projects of a social Utopia; but to establish his dynasty he had also to satisfy the passionate longing of the French people for glory, and the pursuit of glory meant war. Nor was the Emperor adapted by temperament to cope with the difficulties of his situation. He was deficient in true statesmanship, since his means were always ill-proportioned to his ends. He had many amiable qualities, and was accessible to generous emotions; but his irresolution and timidity enmeshed him in a web of diplomatic intrigue, which gave him unjustly the appearance of a mean and scheming adventurer. In range of vision and breadth of conception he towered above most of his contemporaries, but in execution his methods were not commensurate with the greatness of his designs. He awakened aspirations without having the courage to satisfy them; and in the end he not only alienated every interest he had designed to serve, but in the moment of his downfall not a hand in Europe was raised on his behalf. At first, however, Napoleon III. achieved remarkable success. The turning-point in his career came, in fact, in 1859. It coincided with the beginning of the Liberal Empire, but the coincidence was not accidental. His autocracy was unassailable while France was absorbed in the spectacle of

*Character  
of Napo-  
leon III.*



great feats of arms, and he was able with ease to silence 1854-56  
opposition. But as the tendencies of his foreign enterprises  
were gradually disclosed, the political instinct of the nation  
reasserted itself, discontent once more raised its head, and  
the possession of sovereignty began by degrees to slip from  
his grasp. An account of these enterprises will serve to  
indicate the nature and scope of his policy abroad.

It is the paradox of Napoleon's career that his first *The Crimean War.*  
diplomatic venture was expressly designed to propitiate  
those very interests which his subsequent actions were  
destined in later years hopelessly and fatally to antagonize.  
On behalf of the Catholic party in France he laid claim to  
the possession of the Holy Places in Jerusalem, a claim  
contested by Russia as the representative of the Greek or  
Orthodox Church. Out of this obscure controversy, which  
dragged on from 1850 to 1854, although the merits of the  
dispute were never properly understood, developed the  
Crimean War, which cost the lives of over half a million men.  
Napoleon himself cared little about the religious aspect of  
the quarrel, but he could not afford to alienate his Catholic  
supporters. The Tsar of Russia, on his side, would make  
no concessions, and fresh issues were soon involved. The  
cloud which began no bigger than a man's hand rapidly  
overcast the whole sky, and the suspicions and misunder-  
standings of diplomatists sowed the seed of a terrible harvest.  
England was drawn into the conflict because she believed  
the integrity of the Ottoman Empire to be at stake. Her  
apprehensions had been aroused by a proposal of Nicholas I.  
to partition Turkey, for she still considered it part of her  
traditional policy to check Russia's advance in the south.  
Accordingly, at the instigation of the English ambassador,  
the Porte rejected a demand made by the Tsar that the  
Orthodox subjects of Turkey should be placed under Russian  
protection. In the circumstances, Russia was ill-advised  
in putting forward this claim, but the matter ought not to  
have been incapable of adjustment. However, Nicholas,  
feeling his dignity compromised, retorted by occupying the  
Danubian Principalities (Moldavia and Wallachia). His  
action enabled the war-party in Great Britain to force the

1856

—

hand of the Aberdeen ministry, and war ensued. It is now generally recognized by historians that the questions at issue could have been settled without resorting to war; and the results of the conflict afforded no adequate compensation for the blood and treasure expended on it. The Treaty of Paris (1856), which brought the war to a conclusion, neutralized the Black Sea, opened the navigation of the Danube to all countries, emancipated the Danubian Principalities from Turkish control, admitted Turkey to the public law of Europe, and pledged the European Powers to maintain her integrity; in return the Sultan promised to his Christian subjects religious toleration and equal rights with Mussulmans. The treaty was short-lived, its terms being violated almost as soon as the ink on the parchment was dry. Turkey did not carry out her undertaking and her integrity has not remained intact, while the neutrality of the Black Sea lasted only till 1870. Above all, the Crimean War shattered the peace of Europe after it had been maintained for forty years; it ushered in a succession of wars which have transformed the world into an armed camp, and made destruction the goal of human effort and the summit of national ambition. At the moment, however, the outcome of the Russian campaign was acclaimed by the French people with an outburst of enthusiasm. It was undoubtedly a great personal triumph for the Emperor, who presided over the Congress of Paris held to discuss terms of peace, and posed in the eyes of the nation as the arbiter of European destinies. He had emerged successfully from the ordeal of arms, and had preserved from extinction, as it seemed, the traditional ally of France. In wiping out the stains of 1815 and 1840 he had covered France with glory and had attained the pinnacle of his greatness; from this time onwards his fortunes gradually declined, until he was completely overwhelmed by the catastrophe of 1870.

*The  
'national-  
ist' pro-  
gramme of  
the Second  
Empire.*

The Treaty of Paris gave to Napoleon a new lease of power; stimulated by success, he at once began to devise ways and means to turn his prestige to account. The career of Napoleon I. had shown that the passion for glory begets in a nation an inordinate craving which is only

quenched by defeat and suffering ; the career of his nephew, in his turn engulfed in a flood of boundless ambitions, was to demonstrate the same lesson. The moment now seemed ripe to undertake the supreme task bequeathed to him by destiny as part and parcel of his heritage. The ' Napoleonic idea,' hitherto vague and ill-defined, began to acquire substance. It foreshadowed the most far-reaching designs : to remould the map of Europe, to break up the settlement of 1815, to extend the frontiers of France to the Rhine, and to emancipate the oppressed nationalities. Throughout the chancelleries of Europe the Emperor came to be dreaded as a dangerous firebrand, whose restless energy, impulsive temperament and incalculable moods were fraught with serious menace to the stability of the existing political system. The first-fruits of his nationalist programme were seen in the creation of the Roumanian State out of the Danubian Principalities,<sup>1</sup> which had been rendered autonomous at the Congress of Paris. A more ambitious project soon unfolded itself in the schemes for the liberation of Italy. We shall speak of this in a later chapter,<sup>2</sup> but we may remark at this point how Napoleon's Italian policy by its half-hearted measures succeeded in satisfying no one, and marked the beginning of the end of the Empire. To begin with, it fatally impaired his position at home by rekindling the embers of party feuds. The French Clericals were incensed at the injury to the Holy See ; the French Legitimists protested against the expulsion of the Neapolitan Bourbons from southern Italy ; and the French Radicals were estranged because the Emperor's abrupt withdrawal from the war left the Italians in the lurch. Outside France he lost the gratitude of Italy, and destroyed the friendship of England, by his extortion of Nice and Savoy. He alienated Austria by his alliance with Piedmont—an alliance which started the Italian movement on its course ; and he alarmed Prussia by the revelation of his aggressive designs. In a short time Napoleon also deeply offended Russia by intervening in support of Poland during the insurrection of 1863.<sup>3</sup> In France feeling ran high in favour of the Poles,

1856-63

<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, Chapter VI.<sup>2</sup> Chapter V.<sup>3</sup> *Infra*, Chapter VII.



1864-67 — and the Emperor could have rallied all parties to his side by taking up arms on their behalf. To encourage Polish nationality was not only in accordance with the Napoleonic idea, it also appealed to all the traditional instincts of the French people. But England and Austria remained passive, and Napoleon found it impossible to do more than lodge a diplomatic protest which irritated Russia without appeasing the nation. The glory of the Second Empire was waning fast; it set for ever after the Mexican catastrophe.

*The  
Mexican  
episode.*

The Mexican incident, more than anything else in Napoleon's reign, served to illustrate the unstable imagination of the Emperor, his passion for grandiose and fantastic schemes, and lack of forethought and iron resolution to carry his schemes to a successful conclusion. Foiled in his European enterprises, he entertained the design of building up a Catholic and Latin empire in the New World to serve as a counteracting force to Anglo-Saxon influences. He found his opportunity in Mexico, which was distracted by internal dissensions and unable to resist aggression. A pretext for intervention soon offered itself. In 1861 the Government, owing to its financial embarrassments, suspended payments to foreign creditors for two years. Great Britain, France and Spain, after protesting in vain against this breach of faith, sent troops to enforce the rights of their subjects, though they disclaimed any intention "of exercising in the internal affairs of Mexico any influence calculated to infringe the right of the Mexican nation to choose and constitute freely the forms of its government." The country submitted, but Napoleon now disclosed his plan to overthrow the Mexican Republic and set up a Roman Catholic monarchy with Maximilian, the brother of the Austrian Emperor, as its sovereign (1864). For a time the French forces carried everything before them, but the following year the United States, released from civil war, remonstrated against the violation of the Monroe principle which forbids the intervention of European Powers in the New World. Napoleon was confronted with the alternative of withdrawing his troops, or carrying on the struggle to the bitter end against the Mexican nation and the United

States. He chose the former; in 1867 the French army embarked, and Maximilian, who refused to desert his supporters by abdicating the throne, was captured and shot. This disastrous conclusion to the Mexican expedition made a deep impression upon the French people. The Imperial Government had wasted men and money upon an undertaking foredoomed to failure from the outset; it had suffered humiliation at the hands of the United States, and it had dishonoured the name of France by encouraging a foreign prince to face a dangerous enterprise and then abandoning him to his fate. 1867-70

The position of Napoleon was now precarious in the extreme. The efforts of the Liberal Opposition in the Chambers to establish a constitutional system of government were redoubled. Despite the plebiscite of 1870, in which the nation seemed to reassert its confidence in Napoleon, it became evident that a successful war alone could retrieve the fortunes of the Empire, and check the flood of democratic opinion which was threatening to engulf it. The course of events which led up to the Franco-Prussian War will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.<sup>1</sup> The war itself proved fatal to the Empire, which had lost its hold upon the affections of the nation and was discredited by the repeated failure of its foreign enterprises. The hour had at last come to establish a form of government which should no longer be required to stake its existence upon the success of its diplomatic ventures. Three days after the capitulation of the French army at Sedan (September 1, 1870), the Assembly proclaimed the Third Republic. *The end of the Empire.*

<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, p. 75.

## CHAPTER II

### THE GROWTH OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE

(1815-1870)

1815

*The growth  
of nation-  
alities.*

THE outstanding feature of European history in the nineteenth century is the growth of nationalities. Napoleon I. had found his greatest strength, as one of his ministers confessed, in the dilatoriness and blunders of other Governments. The cause of his overthrow was an outburst of intense national feeling which shattered for ever his dreams of a world-wide empire. The awakening of the nations, as the result of foreign conquest, set in motion a force destined to remould the map of Europe and call into existence a new political system. This was the principle of nationality, which has affected so profoundly the development of Europe and created problems of the most vital importance whose solution still lies in the future.

*Germany  
before the  
French  
Revolution.*

Nowhere was the strength of Napoleon greater than in Germany, nowhere was the reaction against his domination more far-reaching in its consequences. On the eve of the French Revolution, Germany was the most divided country in Europe. It comprised over two hundred States owning a nominal obedience to the Emperor, but practically independent in the management of their internal affairs and in their external relations with one another. Austria enjoyed the precedence, and the imperial dignity was vested in the House of the Habsburgs, but Prussia was the stronger military power, and therefore a formidable rival. The rest of the German principalities grouped themselves round Austria or Prussia, while clinging strenuously to their independence and jealously resisting any encroachment



upon their sovereign rights. The only bond between the various States, apart from their shadowy allegiance to the Emperor, was the Diet composed of representatives sent by German princes and towns. These representatives were not national deputies concerned with the welfare of the country as a whole, but envoys charged with a definite mission. The Diet was thus a congress of ambassadors rather than a parliament; it was devoid of authority, possessing neither revenues nor armed forces. It continued to survive not because it served any useful purpose, but as a harmless relic of the Mediæval Empire. This was the political condition of Germany at the end of the eighteenth century; yet at the dawn of the Middle Ages it had displayed greater political cohesion than either England or France. But in Western Europe a succession of competent rulers steadily pursued the single aim of establishing their power on a firm basis, utilizing all their resources to build up a strong central Government. In Germany, on the other hand, the royal house had inherited from Charlemagne a legacy which was fatal to its political fortunes, namely, the Holy Roman Empire. In the early Middle Ages men could not bring themselves to believe that the Roman Empire had ceased to exist, and when the great Frankish king was crowned Emperor in A.D. 800, he came to be regarded as the lineal successor of the Cæsars, a claim to which the extent of his dominions gave him some pretensions. After his death, his empire broke up and the imperial title subsequently lapsed, until it was renewed by Otto I., King of Germany. Henceforth it was the dream of every German ruler to be crowned in Rome as Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. In reality, as Voltaire remarked, the Holy Roman Empire was neither holy, Roman, nor an empire, and Germany paid dearly for her ambition to rule the world. The influence of the Empire was negligible in most parts of Europe—in England, France, Spain and Scandinavia—but it had a disastrous effect upon Germany herself. The attempt of her rulers to establish their authority in Italy involved them in a bitter conflict with the Papacy, which eventually destroyed the strongest dynasty that Germany had known—

1815 — the Hohenstaufen. It distracted their energies, impaired their resources, and left them powerless to cope with the disruptive forces of the feudal system. In the absence of the king, engaged in perpetual expeditions to Italy, the great fiefs established themselves in an impregnable position, usurping sovereign prerogatives and reducing the central Government to impotence. The Reformation and the Thirty Years' War which followed from it completed the disintegration of Germany. It shattered the belief in the Holy Roman Empire. It divided the country into two hostile camps, Protestants and Catholics, and it enabled the princes to extend their power enormously by the absorption of ecclesiastical revenues and property. It left Germany weak and exhausted, with no coherent principles to furnish the basis for a stable political system, but with a multitude of small States oscillating uneasily between the Courts of Vienna and Berlin.

*Effects of  
Napoleon's  
career on  
Germany.*

It is one of the ironies of history that Napoleon was the creator of modern Germany. Directly by his constructive statesmanship, and indirectly by the results which opposition to his rule aroused, he contributed to the formation of a united Germany and laid the foundations of the German Empire. In the first place he reorganized the German state-system by an extensive redistribution of territorial power. He reduced the number of independent States from over two hundred to thirty-nine. He swept away a crowd of petty principalities, ruled over by imperial knights and covering but a few square miles in area, and abolished the free cities with the exception of Hamburg, Frankfort, Bremen and Lübeck. This cleared the ground of all the small sovereignties which had hitherto encumbered it; to this extent, therefore, it simplified the political map of Germany and brought the prospect of federal unity within the range of possibility. On the other hand, it augmented the strength of those States which had escaped destruction and intensified their rivalry and love of independence. Equally significant was the abolition of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806, which was replaced by a Confederation of States dependent upon France. The Holy Roman Empire

had long been a mere obsolete survival, yet its dissolution involved an irreparable breach with the past ; it meant, in fact, that the new German kingdom was to be built up on a *tabula rasa*, a clean slate. Of its own act the Habsburg House yielded up its historic claims to be the ruler of Germany ; henceforth it was possible to conceive a Germany in which Austria had no place. But the most important result of Napoleon's work was one least anticipated by him : the growth of national feeling. The War of Liberation against Napoleon differed fundamentally from all other wars waged by Germany. It was not provoked by a Government intent upon world-aggrandizement, it was the rising of a people in arms to free itself from foreign domination. Goethe had prided himself on his cosmopolitanism ; the new national spirit was exemplified in Arndt's famous war song, "What is the German Fatherland?" If the generous enthusiasm which then inspired the best elements in the German people to throw off the Napoleonic yoke had been afforded scope, the history of Germany in the nineteenth century would have run a different course. It will be necessary to show how the warm hopes of German patriots were chilled by disillusionment, and how eventually the unification of Germany was accomplished not by the people, but by Governments, with consequences which have profoundly affected the subsequent development of Europe.

For a generation after the fall of Napoleon, Germany remained in a stagnant condition. The sacrifices made by the people in the cause of freedom were forgotten or ignored, and no attempt was made by their rulers to satisfy their legitimate desire for national unity. Four reasons in the main serve to explain the fact that, for over a quarter of a century, all efforts towards the political regeneration of Germany bore barren fruit. The period which immediately follows a great war is not usually propitious for the carrying out of important reforms ; the energies of a country will naturally be absorbed in the task of repairing the ravages of war and building up its material prosperity. Accordingly, Germany had first of all to recover from the exhaustion of her struggle with Napoleon and to accommodate herself to

1815

*Causes  
retarding  
the growth  
of a united  
Germany.*

(1) *Ex-  
haustion.*



1815

(2) *Party  
strife.*

the new territorial conditions, before she could seriously turn her thoughts to the reconstruction of the political fabric. Another reason for the set-back to the cause of reform was the lack of agreement among German reformers. Instead of concentrating their efforts upon a common programme, they propounded a great variety of remedies. Some wanted the exclusion of Austria and the union of Germany under Prussia; others, "mostly feudalist reactionists," wished to restore the German Empire under Habsburg sovereignty; a few even advocated a German republic, one and indivisible. "Thus German unity," wrote Karl Marx, "was in itself a question big with disunion, discord and, in the case of certain eventualities, even civil war."<sup>1</sup> Their views on other matters were no less diverse. Problems of internal administration came at once to the front, and the champions of the old order made war to the knife upon those who upheld the social and political traditions of the Revolution. It was difficult to determine whether the War of Liberation was to be regarded as a triumph for those who professed Liberal principles, or for those who held reactionary sentiments. Bonapartism was detested by the former on account of its autocratic methods of government, and by the latter because of its revolutionary origin. In this ferment of ideas and seething mass of conflicting opinions were all the elements of barren party strife.

*The  
intellectual  
movement.*

A characteristic feature of German history is the influence which scholars and men of letters have exerted upon the development of Germany. They gave a powerful impulse to the uprising against Napoleon; and, after the Vienna Congress had disappointed the national aspirations, the Universities—especially Jena—again served the purpose of dissipating mental apathy and focussing public opinion upon the political needs of the moment. "The generation already educated cannot serve them," wrote Metternich; "they therefore turn their attention to those who are to be educated, a plan which commends itself even to the most impatient, for the student generation includes at the most

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution* (ed. 1904), 30.

a space of four years." He complained that German Universities were inspiring the youths confided to them with contempt for, and opposition to, the legally established order; designing nothing less than to educate the people for revolution. Metternich, to whom the "union of all Germans in one Germany" was "an infamous object," watched with growing apprehension the spread of revolutionary doctrines among the youth of Germany. "A whole class of future State officials, professors, and incipient literary men, is here ripened for revolution."<sup>1</sup> A national society of students, known as the *Burschenschaft*, was treated as a revolutionary and dangerous organization; and matters came to a climax with the Wartburg Festival and the murder of Kotzebue—two events which were magnified into a crisis involving "the probable disruption of the united German Confederation." The Wartburg Festival (1817) was a patriotic demonstration organized by the students of Jena University to celebrate the battle of Leipzig and the tercentenary of the Reformation, but ending with a bonfire in which various symbols of reaction were committed to the flames. The incident was scarcely more than an ebullition of youthful spirits, and its significance was exaggerated out of all proportion to its real importance. It aroused the greatest alarm among the authorities, which was intensified by the assassination of Kotzebue in 1819. Kotzebue, who had become notorious from his attacks on the Universities as the alleged centres of political agitation, was particularly obnoxious to German Liberals because they attributed to his influence the 'apostasy' of the Emperor Alexander, the "protector from whom they had the greatest expectations."<sup>2</sup>

As the result, the Governments of Germany plunged headlong into all the excesses which spring from unreasoning panic. Metternich successfully worked upon their fears. "The Governments are now so terrified," he wrote, "that they are willing to act." Everywhere reaction set in. In vain the Duke of Saxe-Weimar—who was the patron of

1815-19

(3) *The  
Carlsbad  
Decrees.*<sup>1</sup> Metternich, *Memoirs* (ed. 1881), iii. 206, 300, 317.<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* iii. 254.



1819

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Goethe and Schiller, and was regarded by Austrian ministers as one of the chief authors and protectors of all the mischief in Germany—protested to the Diet that “freedom of thought and teaching must remain at the Universities; for there, in the open conflict of opinions shall truth be found by the students; there shall the scholar be preserved from *devotion to authorities*, and there shall he be raised (not educated) to independence.” His plea was derided as childish stuff, “the quintessence of all revolutionary teaching,”<sup>1</sup> and his protest was ignored. The Carlsbad Decrees, passed by the Federal Diet in 1819, inaugurated an era of repression and riveted the yoke of despotism upon Germany for thirty years. All Governments were required to appoint commissioners whose function was to supervise the Universities and to exercise a stringent censorship over all publications. A central commission was also instituted at Mainz for the investigation of secret societies, and to accumulate evidence for the judicial tribunals. Metternich had thus achieved a distinct triumph for his policy. Events had played into his hands and he had shown great skill in turning them to account. He won over to his point of view Alexander I., the Tsar of Russia, who, posing as a Liberal, had hitherto discouraged the growth of a reactionary spirit in Germany. At the same time the King of Prussia was ‘frightened’ into the belief that his territories were enveloped in the meshes of a dangerous and widespread conspiracy. Frederick William III. had long been dallying with the idea of a Constitution for his dominions, which he had promised to his subjects in the momentary exaltation evoked by the fall of Napoleon. Metternich’s influence now prevailed with him to renounce his intention of redeeming this promise. The Austrian statesman knew that German Liberals hoped to find in Prussia a lever to set in motion the forces of revolution, and he dreaded the ‘incalculable influence’ which the reorganization of the Prussian State would have upon Germany and Austria. It meant surrendering themselves at ‘one stroke’ to the Revolution. Accordingly he urged that Prussia “requires before every-

<sup>1</sup> Metternich, *Memoirs* (ed. 1881), iii. 271, 272.



thing a free and sound military strength, and this does not and cannot consist with a purely representative system." He recommended that the King should go no further than the formation of provincial diets "in a very carefully considered, circumscribed form."<sup>1</sup> His argument was reinforced by the notorious fact that constitutional experiments in Southern Germany<sup>2</sup> had not been attended with marked success. In Bavaria, Baden, and Württemberg the parliamentary system had been established largely with a view to enlisting popular support against the military monarchies; but the only result had been friction and disorder.

1815

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In his strenuous efforts to stamp out the revolutionary movement in Germany, Metternich did not owe his success entirely to his own skilful tactics. He also profited by the folly of his opponents, who ruined their cause by the extravagance of their proposals and their lack of political experience. After all, however, the various causes we have recounted were subsidiary. Ultimately the failure of Germany to realize the hopes of unity entertained during the War of Liberation sprang from the fact that national consciousness had not yet penetrated deeply enough among the great mass of the people. The demand for a united Germany was not general; it was still confined in the main to the intellectual classes, "the learned caste," whose enthusiasm was apt to outrun their discretion.

(4) *Backward political condition of the nation.*

We have dealt with the reasons why all efforts towards a national Government proved abortive in Germany after 1815; yet the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire made necessary some form of political federation to take its place. On this account the Vienna Congress established the Germanic Confederation, which nominally survived no less than half a century. Its object, as stated in the Act of Confederation,<sup>3</sup> was to guarantee the external and internal security of Germany and the independence and inviolability of her component States. This guarantee, however, did not extend to the non-German possessions of the chief States—

*The Germanic Confederation.*

<sup>1</sup> Metternich, *Memoirs* (ed. 1881), iii. 198, 301.

<sup>2</sup> *Infra*, p. 54.

<sup>3</sup> E. Hertslet, *The Map of Europe by Treaty* (1875), i. 244 *seq.*

1815

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Austria and Prussia—but it bound all the German States to render mutual support whenever required, and to make no attack on each other. The organ of the Federal body was the Diet, which was vested with the control of all federal concerns, though the members remained “separate in administrative respects.” This Diet comprised two different forms of assembly. The ordinary or ‘narrower’ assembly contained seventeen delegates, one each for the eleven larger States, and the rest distributed among the remaining twenty-eight States. All important business, however, was reserved for the general assembly, in which every State had at least one vote, the chief States four, and a few others two or three; in all, the number of delegates here amounted to sixty-nine. A unanimous vote was apparently required for any changes affecting “fundamental laws, organic institutions, individual rights, or affairs of religion,” a condition which virtually excluded every possibility of innovation or amendment. As an additional safeguard the presidency of the Diet was entrusted to the Austrian delegate; for Austria, under the controlling guidance of Metternich, was the bulwark of reaction in Germany.

*Its defects.*

Whatever may have been the merits of this Constitution on paper, it worked out disastrously in practice. It never had a chance of success from the start; it satisfied no one in Germany save Metternich alone, who was able to manipulate it to suit his own interests. To begin with, it reproduced the dualism so fatal to Germany in the eighteenth century; it sought to establish an equilibrium of forces between the two military monarchies, although there was obviously no room for both Austria and Prussia in the Germanic system. Austrian influence predominated, and the skilful intrigues of Metternich drew the small German States to his side. His ascendancy enabled him to defeat the hopes of those who saw in the Diet the instrument for the end they had in view, the attainment of German unity. The futility of the Diet for purposes of practical reform became unmistakable when the Austrian president of the Diet pronounced the fundamental laws of the Constitution to be, like the Bible, incapable of change. In other ways

the Diet soon exposed its weakness to the German people. It suffered from two defects: (1) Its members were the representatives of the German princes, and were bound by the strict letter of their mandates. Now the German princes clung tenaciously to their rights of sovereignty and jealously resisted any encroachment on the part of the Federal body. They were not prepared to surrender to the Diet a single prerogative; to employ federal terminology, they viewed the Germanic Confederation in the light of a league of states (*Staatenbund*), not as a federal state (*Bundesstaat*). In these circumstances the members of the Diet had absolutely no freedom of action, and were dependent at every turn for their instructions upon the Governments which they represented. Thus the institution of a Diet was no real step in the direction of German unity; on the contrary, it served to emphasise the territorial disunion of Germany. Particularism—the independence of the princes—had been for centuries the bane of German development; it had now captured the central Government itself. (2) The second defect was that the Diet was destitute of the necessary machinery to enforce its injunctions. It showed its weakness at the very outset of its career, when the inhabitants of Hesse appealed against the arbitrary decision of their Elector, that every act done in his territory during the French occupation was invalid. The Diet condemned the Elector, who turned refractory and declined to accept its jurisdiction. Metternich intervened on his behalf and rebuked the Austrian president for upholding the Diet's right to intervene in controversies between subjects and their sovereigns. The Diet lacked the power to reduce the Elector to submission, and its impotence not only seriously compromised its dignity but also made it abundantly clear to every Government that obedience to its decrees was optional. This was scarcely a promising beginning for the new central Government upon which Liberal sentiment had built its hopes for the future salvation of Germany, and its subsequent history was in the same vein of sheer ineptitude. It made no further attempts to protect the victims of tyranny or to solve constitutional problems of any kind, while its



1815 — dilatoriness in general matters became a byword. Its functions, in short, were strictly circumscribed in accordance with the principle laid down by Metternich that abroad the Diet should enable Germany to present a united front towards foreign countries, while at home it safeguarded the members of the Federation from Liberal assaults. Its most memorable act was to pass the Carlsbad Decrees, to which we have already alluded, and to lay down the principle that the existence of 'responsible Governments' was contrary to the German Constitution. After 1828 it ceased almost entirely to hold meetings; so far from promoting the unity of Germany it had served only to retard it.

Metternich's  
political  
creed.

It is the inherent vice of all systems of government not broad-based upon the people's will, that they are liable to be uprooted at the first gust of popular passion. Metternich was essentially an opportunist, a master in the art of diplomatic intrigue, but he built his calculations upon shifting sands. He held that "political repose rests on fraternization between monarchs, and on the principle of maintaining that which is"; and in practice this meant a league of sovereigns against their people. Although not by nature a pure reactionary, and condemning the "dreadful abuse of power"<sup>1</sup> of which many German princes were guilty, the keynote of his policy was necessarily reaction, since he set himself to combat those tendencies of the future which he judged destructive of the existing order. But a political system based on repression is foredoomed from the start. Karl Marx, who has left on record an acute analysis of the varied elements in German society, wrote in 1851: "The times of that superstition which attributed revolutions to the ill-will of a few agitators have long passed away. Every one knows nowadays that, wherever there is a revolutionary convulsion, there must be some social want in the background, which is prevented by outworn institutions from satisfying itself. . . . Every attempt at forcible repression will only bring it forth stronger and stronger, until it bursts its fetters."<sup>2</sup> In 1848 the German people

<sup>1</sup> Metternich, *Memoirs* (ed. 1881), iii. 199, 202.

<sup>2</sup> Marx, *op. cit.* 2.

made their first serious attempt to achieve at one stroke unity and constitutionalism. The overthrow of the Orleans dynasty furnished the signal, though the forces of revolution had long been maturing. The rapidity with which they now spread through every quarter of Germany showed that all classes of the community were honeycombed with discontent. The movement of 1848 wore a dual aspect. On the one hand, there was in every State a demand for free institutions; on the other, there was a demand for unity and a central representative system. It will be convenient to keep these two aspects distinct, provided it is remembered that ultimately they were part and parcel of one and the same movement.

1815-48  
Dual  
aspect  
of the  
Revolution  
of 1848.

(1) The generation which fought for Germany in the War of Liberation suffered a double disillusionment. The party of German unity led by Stein saw its hopes wrecked by the incapacity of the sovereign princes to make sacrifices in the common cause of nationality. The party of German Liberals had even more serious ground for complaint. The Thirteenth Article in the Federal Act bound every prince of the Federation to grant his subjects an Assembly of Estates, that is, representative government. This promise of constitutional liberty was a formal pledge to the whole German people. The Duke of Weimar set the example by immediately granting a Constitution to his territories. But the Diet itself, the guardian of the Federal Constitution, refused to take any steps to enforce the Article, and left its execution a matter for the discretion of the individual princes. Metternich ruled that every State had the right to regulate its internal affairs according to its own views.<sup>1</sup> In his adherence to this principle he was not always consistent, for we have already seen how he forced all the German princes to accept the Carlsbad Decrees. Hence the liberty of German Governments to act as they pleased meant in practice that they must act as Austria pleased. In one direction alone no check was placed upon them: they could be as reactionary as they liked, and the greater number did not hesitate to avail themselves of the licence. Three South German

(1) The  
constitu-  
tional  
movement

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs*, iii. 312.

1815-48 States—Bavaria, Würtemberg, and Baden—did, however, follow the lead given by the enlightened Duke of Weimar. (a) *In South Germany.* Bavaria was ambitious to wrest from Prussia her predominance in Germany by establishing an alliance of progressive States under her auspices. She also had designs upon Baden; and it seemed, therefore, desirable to disarm public opinion by making a show of Liberal sympathies. Confronted with this danger from Bavaria, the ruler of Baden granted a Constitution in order to strengthen the popularity of his House and win the favour of the Emperor Alexander. In Würtemberg the traditions of a constitutional regime still survived, and a Constitution on modern lines ought to have met with success. The experiment failed owing to the obstructive tactics of the aristocratic and clerical factions, which would rest content with nothing less than the restoration of their mediæval privileges; accordingly, the scheme proved abortive. As to the other minor States, it is sufficient to remark that Liberal principles made no real headway. After all, the fate of the constitutional movement in Germany was necessarily bound up with the attitude of Prussia, whose extent of territory and military resources made her inevitably the chief German Power. (b) *In Prussia.* As Karl Marx afterwards wrote: "Without a fundamental change in the policy and constitution" of either Austria or Prussia, "no secondary efforts and victories would be of any avail." The Prussian King, a man of weak though obstinate character, long oscillated between reaction and progress. For a time it appeared as though his minister, Hardenberg, who with Stein had raised up Prussia from her degradation, would carry the day in favour of a Liberal programme. But Austria drew her the other way, and after 1818 Alexander, no longer a 'Jacobin,' also ranged himself by the side of Austria. The union of Austria and Russia proved irresistible; and, as we have already shown, Metternich's influence triumphed. It must be acknowledged, also, that the constitutional problem in Prussia was extremely complicated; however simple the issue might seem to doctrinaire Liberals, practical statesmen had to recognize the difficulties with which their path was strewn. Prussia was not a consolidated State, but a



mosaic of scattered provinces. There was local patriotism, but little national feeling, and a bureaucratic Government was the sole bond between territories so diverse as the Rhine lands, East and West Prussia, and the Polish provinces. The energies of her statesmen were therefore naturally absorbed in the task of assimilating the extensive acquisitions made in 1815, which at once doubled the population and created the need for scientific frontiers. Apart from the pressing problems of internal administration, there was a great confusion of political parties, combined with all the baneful effects of a rigid social system. Prussia, now as always, was "the classic land of *Junkertum*, and militarism"; and the pretensions of the 'squirearchy' and the dominance of military traditions were fatal to orderly constitutional development. Ultimately the tardy progress of Liberalism was due to the Prussian temperament. The basis of all Liberal principles is individualism. The demand for free institutions—that is, for liberty of thought and action—is essentially a demand for the rights of the individual. But in Prussia the individual was completely subordinated to the State, for the historical reason that the growth of Prussia was the achievement of the Prussian State. Now the sturdy plant of Liberalism could hardly thrive in soil where the individual was willing to sacrifice initiative and self-expression for the efficiency of a paternal despotism. These various considerations may serve as the explanation why the first real attempt made by Prussian Liberals in 1848 to obtain political power was so easily quenched.

The effects of the French Revolution of 1830 upon Germany had been slight, although a few States, where the situation was particularly intolerable, were forced to make concessions. The main result, indeed, was to reinvigorate the spirit of repression, which had shown a tendency to subside; and fresh reactionary decrees were promulgated by the Diet. But in 1840 Frederick William IV. came to the throne of Prussia, and a new era seemed at hand. He was known to be out of sympathy with the "predominantly bureaucratic and military monarchy" of his predecessor, and not disinclined to tolerate some form of the representa-

1815-48

Frederick  
William  
IV. (1840-  
1861).

1848  
—The  
'March  
Days.'

tive system. The *bourgeoisie*, who represented the commercial and manufacturing interests, cherished the hope that they would at length be admitted to a share in Government. Although behind the middle classes in England and France in point of numbers and wealth, they felt their energies cramped by bureaucratic despotism, and desired wider scope for their political activities. Their expectations were doomed to be disappointed, for the King, upon whom they relied, was more concerned to revive feudal institutions and class privileges, in short, the "predominant social position of the nobility." In 1848, however, the time at last appeared ripe for Liberal forces to assert themselves. Upon the news of the Parisian insurrection, the population of Berlin rose in revolt and erected barricades. As a consequence of the 'March Days,' as they were called, Frederick William IV. was compelled to parade the streets wearing the colours of the German Empire, to suppress the censorship, and to summon the Combined Diet, composed of representatives from the provincial assemblies. The capitals of minor German States witnessed similar scenes. "The German people," observed a contemporary, "were at last fairly launched into the revolutionary career." Everywhere rose the cry for responsible governments and popular ministries, for a free Press, trial by jury, and religious toleration. For the moment the German sovereigns bowed before the storm. Yet the triumph of the constitutional party, whose fate depended upon Prussia, was short-lived. The Prussian *bourgeoisie* grew alarmed at the extent of their own success. The outbreak of the February Revolution in Paris had furnished a stimulus, it was now to afford a warning. It revealed itself as a protest of the working classes against the political supremacy of the middle classes; a protest, in short, against the very object which the revolution in Prussia was designed to effect. The emergence of the working classes was the last thing, however, the Prussian *bourgeoisie* wanted; above all things they dreaded lest the populace in Berlin should gain the upper hand. The march of events had produced a singular situation, parallel to that which existed in France in 1830, when the French *bourgeoisie*

were compelled to invoke the aid of Louis Philippe. The Prussian *bourgeoisie* in their turn found the support of the monarchy indispensable as a protection against the political aspirations of the working classes. They formed a tacit alliance with the vanquished party in checking the revolutionary passions which their own example had done so much to incite. Their opposition to the Government was therefore necessarily timid and vacillating. The forces of reaction gathered strength; they had made the valuable discovery that there was really nothing to fear from the middle classes. They patiently bided their time, but when the moment for action arrived they took prompt and decisive steps. They dissolved the Assembly elected to frame a Constitution, and imposed upon the country as the gift of the King, not as the inherent right of the nation, a Constitution manufactured in accordance with the views of the Court circles. In this way the constitutional movement which had opened so auspiciously for Prussia flickered out ignominiously owing to the weakness and irresolution of its authors.

1848  
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(2) We have now to trace the history of the corresponding movement towards a United Germany. The stronghold of the national party was in the south-west, and the desire to unite all the *disjecta membra* of the German body was naturally most insistent, as contemporaries remarked, "in the smaller States where the costliness of a court, an administration, an army, in short, the dead weight of taxation, increased in a direct ratio with the smallness and impotency of the State."<sup>1</sup> It is important to observe that the French Revolution of 1848 was not the origin of the German national movement, although it supplied the driving force, while the fact that Austria was paralysed by internal dissensions also materially affected the situation. As early as 1847, a meeting of Liberal representatives voiced the demand for a national parliament which should focus at a single point the energies of the whole people. The Revolution in Paris gave a powerful impulse to the national party to take definite action. On March 5 a number of Liberal

(2) *The nationalist movement.*<sup>1</sup> Marx, *op. cit.* 30.



1848

— leaders came together at Heidelberg and entrusted a committee of seven with the task of summoning a preliminary convention, or *vorparlament*. This met, without sanction of the Governments, at Frankfort on March 31, and ordered an election to be held on the basis of one delegate for every fifty thousand voters. The Diet, constrained by the overwhelming force of public opinion, gave its adhesion to the scheme. The German princes dared offer no resistance; even Frederick William addressed a proclamation to "my people and the German nation," in which he announced that "Prussia's interests shall henceforth be those of Germany." Events speedily indicated the extent to which Prussia was prepared to let herself be absorbed by Germany.

The  
Frankfort  
Assembly  
(1848).

The passionate desire of the German people to attain unity had at length crystallized in a material form. The Diet had never satisfied the people; from the outset nothing but a league of princes, it had become a worn-out institution which had long ceased to fulfil any useful object. But the German nation was now afforded a unique opportunity to make or mar its destinies. Austria, the vigilant foe of revolutions, was herself in the throes of a revolution; Frederick William and the minor German princes were equally concerned to walk warily and abstain from open antagonism. With their enemies thus momentarily disarmed, and a German parliament actually in session, victory seemed to lie within the grasp of the nationalists. If the Frankfort Assembly had achieved its purpose of giving life and substance to the national movement, the history of Germany would have worn a different aspect. There would have been no Sadowa, perhaps no Sedan; and the German Empire—built up not on the unstable foundations of militarism but on the basis of enlightened democratic opinion—would have been a guarantee of peace. But the record of the National Assembly is one of unqualified failure. It was not composed of the right men, or it lacked leaders with the vision to recognize, and the courage and skill to pursue, the right course. Karl Marx pours unlimited scorn upon "this Assembly of old women." He describes it as "an Assembly composed in its majority of Liberal attorneys and doctrinaire

professors, an Assembly which, while it pretended to embody the very essence of German intellect and science, was in reality nothing but a stage where old and worn-out political characters exhibited their involuntary ludicrousness and their impotence of thought, as well as action, before the eyes of all Germany." <sup>1</sup> Marx was a prejudiced observer; but it seems impossible to deny that the delegates conducted their concerns in the spirit of a society of savants, intent only upon the exposition of their favourite political theories. In England the Puritan Revolution transferred the control of affairs from the monarchy into the hands of men who had received as Justices of the Peace a training in local Government, which fitted them for the part they were called upon by destiny to undertake. Germany in 1848, like France in 1789, paid a heavy penalty for the fact the 'mysteries of state' had remained a sealed book to those outside the charmed circles of the Government.

The Assembly met on May 13. Its first task was to set *its history* up a provisional Government. This consisted of an irresponsible Vicar (Regent) of the Empire, acting through a responsible ministry. The Archduke John was nominated to the position of Regent, and his authority was recognized by the German princes. The work of reforming the federal Constitution of Germany was now taken in hand. In imitation of the precedent set by the American and French Revolutions, the 'fundamental rights' of the German nation were debated with eloquence, but the invaluable time consumed in theoretical discussions would have been more profitably spent in establishing the power of the Assembly upon an armed basis. The delegates were destitute of political knowledge, yet even the most inexperienced among them ought to have grasped the fact that in the momentary paralysis of Austria and Prussia lay their only opportunity for making the regeneration of Germany a *fait accompli*, which those two States would be bound to respect. Force was the only argument which the military monarchies understood, but from the start the Frankfort Assembly exhibited its impotence to the whole German

<sup>1</sup> Marx, *op. cit.* 53.



1848-49 — world in connexion with the Schleswig-Holstein crisis. The duchies of Holstein and Schleswig revolted against Denmark, and attempted to unite themselves with Germany. Prussia intervened on their behalf, but the European Powers declined to allow any dismemberment of Denmark; and they forced Frederick William to conclude the Convention of Malmoe (August 1848) and withdraw his troops. Thereupon the duchies appealed to the National Assembly, which protested against what it considered to be a betrayal of the German cause and rejected the Convention. The ministry, unable to exert pressure upon Frederick William, resigned, and the Assembly in the end was compelled to ratify the truce. Immediately an insurrection broke out in the streets of Frankfort, and two deputies were murdered by an infuriated mob. The rising was crushed by Austrian and Prussian troops, but henceforth the dignity and prestige of the German parliament were fatally impaired. Its vacillation had destroyed the only real basis of its authority, the support of the people; while it had now forfeited its independence by employing Prussia to suppress a popular riot. The sequel showed that the rulers of Germany were not slow to take advantage of its weakness. None the less, despite this unpromising beginning, the Assembly continued its labours on the Constitution of Germany. Two main problems confronted it: (1) the position of Austria, and (2) the form of the new federal Government.

*Austria's  
relations  
with  
Germany.*

(1) Austria's relation to Germany raised a vexed question bristling with insuperable difficulties. One solution was to include all the Habsburg dominions within the new German Empire. This was hardly practicable, especially at a moment when the Austrian monarchy appeared in the last stages of dissolution. An alternative proposition to exclude Austria altogether was one for which German public opinion appeared scarcely ripe, and was bound in any case to excite the aversion of Frederick William. Dahlmann, the Prussian representative, attempted a half-way course and brought forward a third proposal, which was incorporated as an Article of the Frankfort Constitution. This declared that "no part of the German Empire may form part of a State



containing non-German territories." Where a sovereign ruled over territories of composite nationality, the relation between his German and non-German dominions was to be one of personal union ; that is, they were to form separate States—like England and Scotland under the Stuarts—united only by the common tie of allegiance to the throne. This Article spelt the disintegration of the Austrian State ; it admitted the German portion, but shut out the remainder. The Austrian minister Schwarzenberg, although willing to include the Habsburg monarchy as a whole, would not consent to its virtual partition, involving as it did a most profound change in the internal structure of the Empire. The National Assembly met his refusal by the formal exclusion of Austria from the German Federation.

1849  
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(2) The first problem had been solved by the elimination of Austria from a United Germany ; the attempted solution of the second problem was to offer the imperial crown to the King of Prussia. The reasons why the offer was made to Prussia and why it was rejected merit careful attention. No State had experienced greater reverses at the hands of Napoleon than Prussia, which lost half her population and was burdened with an army of occupation and an immense debt. Her resurrection was the work of non-Prussians—Stein, Arndt, Fichte, Hardenberg, Scharnhorst—attracted to her service from all parts of Germany as the one State which seemed to possess the qualities of leadership for a national uprising. Her great King, Frederick II., now became a national hero—despite the fact that he had cared only for French, not for German culture, and worked purely for the aggrandizement of his own kingdom—owing to his memorable victories over the invaders of German soil. Regenerated by the reforms of Stein and his colleagues, and inspired by the patriotic teachings of Fichte and Arndt, Prussia rushed to arms in 1813, and in the War of Liberation she played a leading part. As a result of the struggle she acquired possession of the Rhine provinces, and this proved significant in two ways. Henceforth she covered more purely German territory than any other State, thus usurping the position hitherto occupied by Austria. Again, upon

*Prussia's  
position in  
Germany.*

1849  
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Prussia now devolved the task of defending the Rhine frontier against France, and as the guardian of Germany she was bound ultimately to assume the headship of Germany. Austria, on the other hand, did not hesitate to cast aside her German obligations. She alienated public opinion by an alliance with Napoleon, to whom she gave the hand of an Austrian archduchess in marriage. She made no concealment of the fact that her interests lay not towards the Rhine, but along the Danube. Her face was turned eastward; even in the eighteenth century she had sought to rid herself of Belgium, and she willingly sacrificed it in 1815 at the Congress of Vienna. Metternich confessed that purely Austrian affairs were nearer to him than Austro-German.<sup>1</sup> His policy was to keep Germany weak and disunited, and German patriots could expect no encouragement from one whose sole principle of Government was to crush every progressive movement. For these various reasons the national sentiment gradually fell away from the Habsburg monarchy, and clustered round the fabric of the Prussian dynasty. Yet it took Prussia half a century to summon up resolution to contest with Austria the hegemony of Germany. For many years she was content with the rank of second State, and allowed Austria to enjoy precedence in German affairs. "I could write you a long letter," wrote Gentz in 1818, "about the honour which Prussians pay to everything Austrian. . . . Metternich has fairly enchanted them." Moreover, the old loyalty to the Habsburgs, who for five centuries had been the custodians of the imperial traditions, died hard. Metternich has left on record a description of the visit paid by the Emperor Francis to Cologne Cathedral in 1818. "The people, who had forced the doors to see the Emperor, all fell on their knees instantly," while the King of Prussia stood among his subjects, looking "very uncomfortable."<sup>2</sup> It was this instinctive loyalty to the Austrian House, and what Bismarck called "a garnish of mediævalism"—"his romantic mediæval reminiscences of the Empire"<sup>3</sup>—which largely prevailed with

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs*, iii. 304.<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs*, iii. 143.<sup>3</sup> Bismarck, *Reflections and Reminiscences* (1898), i. 44, 47.

Frederick William to repudiate the honour proffered him by the National Assembly. He felt conscientious scruples in supplanting the legitimate claimant, and he was not prepared to run the risk of war with Austria and perhaps even with Russia. Other motives equally influenced him in rejecting the imperial crown. Conscious of his deficiency in statesmanship, he shrank from the difficulties in which its acceptance would involve him. "Frederick the Great," he confessed, "would have been the man for the occasion—as for himself, he was not a great ruler." The fact that the Constitution gave the Emperor only a suspensory veto, not an absolute one, also carried weight with him. Above all, he was resolved not to take a 'crown of shame' from the hands of a popular assembly; he would only accept the dignity if pressed upon him by the princes of Germany. In his eyes the Frankfort Parliament was a 'revolutionary' body, which lacked "a legitimate mandate owing to the want of acquiescence on the part of the ruling houses."<sup>1</sup> Not only did the King refuse the crown, he also withheld his consent to the Frankfort Constitution, and so sealed the fate of the National Assembly. Austria and the four minor kingdoms—Bavaria, Saxony, Hanover, and Würtemberg—followed suit, and the German Parliament collapsed when Austria and Prussia now withdrew their representatives. Twenty-eight States, indeed, approved of the Constitution, but politically they were too insignificant to counteract the influence of their more important neighbours. Thus the effort of the German people to work out their own salvation ended in ignominious failure.

Prussia had been responsible for the failure of the Frankfort Assembly to achieve the union of Germany. Austria in her turn now thwarted a scheme initiated by Prussia. This was constructed on a different basis; in place of the Constitution drawn up by the 'revolutionary' Assembly at Frankfort, it proposed a confederation of Governments united under the hegemony of Prussia. The experiment was avowedly tentative; no compulsion was to be applied to any State, and the federation was to constitute a voluntary

*Prussia's  
federal  
scheme.*

<sup>1</sup> Bismarck, *Reflections and Reminiscences* (1898), i. 62.



1850 — union of sovereigns. A conference was summoned to Berlin, where only Hanover and Saxony appeared to favour the idea, and they formed an alliance with Prussia, known as "The League of the Three Kings." Austria, Bavaria, and Württemberg held aloof, but the promise of a constitution won over the national leaders (the 'Gotha' party), and the petty States therefore threw in their lot with Prussia. Hanover and Saxony proved, however, to be broken reeds. From the outset the conduct of their Governments was insincere; they entered the League with the deliberate intention of withdrawing from it upon the first occasion which presented itself, and all along they dissembled their secret hostility to Prussia's designs. The mask was torn away as soon as a proposal was broached for the summons of a fresh National Assembly. Immediately they raised the plea that the Federal Act of 1815 required the consent of all members of the Germanic body to make valid any changes in the Constitution. This objection was a mere pretext to cover their secession from the movement, for they were well aware that Austria would never agree to another National Assembly. Under these circumstances Prussia had no option but to pass over their protests, although Frederick William was already beginning to display his customary vacillation, and Conservatives like Bismarck were violently opposed to the whole project. She had, in fact, gone too far to draw back, and so, thanks to the influence exercised by Austria over Hanover and Saxony, the League of the Three Kings came to an end. In spite of their defection, the elections were held, and the Erfurt Parliament met in March 1850.

*Austria's  
triumph.*

Austria now took steps to organize more effectively her resistance to Prussia's federal ambitions. The suppression of the Hungarian revolt set her free to devote attention to German affairs and to restore the political situation as it existed in 1815. It was abundantly clear that the progress of the national movement involved the exclusion of the Austrian Empire from Germany, inasmuch as Austria would never acquiesce in the separate treatment of her German territories. It was also in accordance with her traditional

policy to oppose the introduction of the constitutional changes foreshadowed in the demand for a National Assembly. Hence, from the first, she protested against Frederick William assuming the rôle of German overlord, while she also repudiated all schemes for the reconstruction of Germany on really national lines. In the pursuance of these obstructive tactics, Schwarzenberg now associated himself with the "League of the Four Kings," namely, Bavaria, Würtemberg, Hanover, and Saxony. His design was to restore the old Germanic Confederation, which had become actually extinct, though legally it still survived, but to replace the Federal Council by a Directory of seven States (Austria, Prussia, the four minor kingdoms, and the two Hesses). A number of States fell in with this proposal, and so furnished a nucleus for the revived Confederation. But Frederick William refused to enter the Confederation, and Germany was thus openly divided between Prussia with her Union of petty States on the one hand, and Austria with the nascent Confederation on the other. Circumstances speedily provoked a crisis which developed into a trial of strength between the two contending forces. The Elector of Hesse-Cassel was at bitter feud with his subjects, whom he had deeply alienated by withdrawing from the Prussian League, as well as by his attack upon their parliamentary rights. He appealed to the Federal Diet, which Austria had restored, and where her influence was paramount. The Diet declared in his favour, and Austria, Bavaria and Würtemberg placed an army of 200,000 men in the field to overcome all opposition to the Elector's reinstatement. The King of Prussia now found himself upon the horns of a critical dilemma. The people of Hesse had a natural right to invoke his assistance as the head of the Union which they had joined, and he would forfeit his position as leader of the national movement if he allowed the constitutional liberties of Hesse to be trampled upon by the armed forces of reaction. On the other hand, he shrank from a conflict with Austria, which demanded that Prussia should abstain from interference with the execution of the Federal decree. The real issue at stake concerned something more than the



1850  
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pacification of Hesse. It involved the fundamental question whether the policy of the Union, which comprised only German States and professed constitutional principles, should carry the day; or whether the policy of the Germanic Confederation, which included the entire Austrian Empire and was avowedly reactionary, should prevail. The Prussian ministry cut the Gordian knot by surrendering to Austria's demands. Her army was not organized for effective resistance; and, as Bismarck afterwards wrote, "from the military point of view our hands were tied." At the Convention of Olmütz (November 1850), Prussia abandoned Hesse to her fate, and agreed to the dissolution of the Union. This was followed by the Dresden Conferences, which revived the old Germanic Confederation and the Federal Diet. Thus, as the result of three years of revolution and counter-revolution, Austria emerged victorious, while Prussia experienced deep humiliation. In a speech defending the conduct of the Prussian ministry in refusing to declare war, Bismarck uttered these remarkable words: "It is easy for a statesman, whether he be in the Cabinet or the Chamber, to blow a blast with the wind of popularity on the trumpet of war, warming himself the while at his own fireside; or to thunder orations from this tribune and then to leave it to the musketeer who is bleeding to death in the snow whether his system win fame and victory or no. There is nothing easier than that; but woe to the statesman who in these days does not look around him for a reason for war *which will hold water when the war is over.*"<sup>1</sup>

Prussia's  
military  
reconstruc-  
tion.

The Convention of Olmütz left behind it ineffaceable memories. In the struggle for predominance in Germany, Prussia had been worsted by Austria owing to grave defects in her military system. Her rulers learnt the lesson, and henceforth their energies were absorbed in the effort to forge a weapon which should make Prussia the most formidable Power in Europe. All the instincts and traditions of her governing class were military; for, while the Austrian monarchy was built up by marriages, the Prussian monarchy was created by the sword. Accordingly the reorganiza-

<sup>1</sup> Bismarck, *Reflections*, i. 79.



tion of the army became the leading idea of Prussia's internal policy, and every obstacle, constitutional or financial, was swept aside in the pursuit of this supreme and fundamental object. It was not, however, until William I. succeeded his brother, first as Regent (1857), then as King (1861), that the work of reconstruction was seriously taken in hand. His plan was to raise thirty-nine new regiments by enforcing more strictly the obligation to compulsory service. In this way the size of the standing army was to be extended from two hundred thousand to nearly half a million, while the militia (*Landwehr*) was to be reduced from four hundred thousand to one hundred and sixty-three thousand. This scheme was opposed by Prussian Liberals, who wished to achieve the unity of Germany not at the point of the sword, but by the spread of national ideas and the force of public opinion. As they commanded a majority in the Chamber, and were in a position to refuse the necessary supplies, they appeared to dominate the situation. The King appealed to the country, but the people returned the Liberals to power with an increased majority. A constitutional crisis followed. William was resolved to abdicate rather than disband the new regiments; the representatives of the people were no less resolved to assert the right of Parliament to control the Executive. As a final resource the King summoned Bismarck to the head of the ministry (1862). All unwittingly his act proved the beginning of a new epoch for Prussia and for Germany.

When a list of Cabinet ministers was drawn up in 1848 during the course of the critical struggle between the monarchy and the Prussian Legislature, Frederick William IV. wrote in the margin by the side of Bismarck's name: "Only to be employed when the bayonet governs unrestricted."<sup>1</sup> The career of the new minister had already exhibited the qualities to which his present position was now to give full scope. He was always distinguished for his strong 'monarchical sentiments.' "My historical sympathies," he wrote in his *Reflections and Reminiscences*, describing his earliest impressions, "remained on the side of authority.

<sup>1</sup> Bismarck, *Reflections*, i. 55.

1862-70 — To my childish ideas of justice Harmodius and Aristogeiton, as well as Brutus, were criminals, and Tell a rebel and murderer. Every German prince who resisted the Emperor before the Thirty Years' War roused my ire ; but from the Great Elector onwards I was partisan enough to take an anti-imperial view." In the legislative Assembly summoned by Frederick William in 1847, he was the mouthpiece of the reactionary party, and during the March Days he urged the King to stamp out the insurrection at the point of the sword. He shared the prevailing sentiment in favour of German unity, but in the methods to be followed he held very different views from the mass of his contemporaries. He strongly repudiated the opinion entertained both by Frederick William IV. and by the Frankfort Assembly that "the hegemony in Germany would fall to Prussia without war, and in a manner compatible with legitimistic ideas." This expectation was founded, so Bismarck declared, upon a double error : "an under-estimate of the vital energy of the German dynasties and their States, and an over-estimate of the forces which can be summed up in the term 'barricade,' comprehending therein all the impulses which prepare the way to a barricade, agitation, and threats with street-fighting."<sup>1</sup> What this meant was that the advocates of a National Parliament failed to recognize that its decrees were mere paper resolutions, and that in any conflict with German princes the final word would lie with those who could summon 'brute force' to their assistance. The temporary success achieved by the revolutionary elements in 1848 was attributed not to the intrinsic strength of the popular movement, but to the fact that German sovereigns were momentarily taken by surprise, while their ministers were at heart in sympathy with the insurgents. Hence, as soon as the princes appointed ministers "who were prepared to support the prerogative without regard to parliamentary decisions," the whole danger immediately vanished, and the monarchy everywhere triumphed over the revolution. This was the light in which Bismarck interpreted the great events of 1848, and the conclusions drawn from them served to fortify his

<sup>1</sup> *Reflections*, i. 60.

convictions and to steel his resolution. One idea henceforth coloured his entire outlook ; it was expressed in the famous words ' blood and iron,' implying that argument is no substitute for force. He speaks scornfully in his *Reminiscences* about the ' moral conquests ' of Prussia ; the German Empire must be built up not by the permeation of ideas, but by the achievements of the sword. 1862-70

The history of Bismarck during the quarter of a century in which he controlled the destinies of Germany, and made her the strongest military Power in Europe, is the record of statesmanship directed with sagacity, insight, and ruthless energy towards the attainment of a single object. His purpose was to end the dualism which had been the bane of the German political system by driving Austria out of the Confederation, and he steadily worked to accomplish this by war instead of by peaceable means. The conflict with France did not constitute the essence of his original design ; it was intended rather as the coping stone to complete the edifice so laboriously constructed. We can best describe the scope and methods of his policy by examining his relations (1) with the Prussian Chambers, (2) with Austria, (3) with France ; concluding our survey with an account of the *Zollverein* and a comparison of Bismarck and Cavour. His object.

(1) According to his own account, Bismarck had no liking for the ' uncontrolled absolutism ' portrayed in the monarchy of Louis XIV. He favoured public criticism of the Government by an independent representative assembly and by the press. His experience of court circles had convinced him that no sovereign can be trusted to display the qualities required of an absolute ruler—" impartiality, honesty, devotion to duty, energy, and inward humility," as well as omniscience and insusceptibility to flattery. But theoretical considerations were not allowed to influence his practical conduct. He had no scruples in adopting any means which conduced to the end he had in view ; and if free institutions and a free press were obstacles in his path, he would not hesitate to trample on the former and stifle the latter. This became immediately apparent in his treat- (1) Relations with the Prussian Legislature



1862-70 — ment of the Prussian Chambers. He offered the Opposition to include its leaders in his Cabinet, provided they accepted his military schemes. The proposal was refused, and the Assembly not only rejected the army reforms, but also withheld supplies. Bismarck now displayed his iron resolution and strength of will; in defiance of the Legislature, he proceeded to take in hand the reorganization of the army and to dispense with the budget. To govern in the face of a parliamentary majority, and to carry out far-reaching projects in the teeth of the people's representatives, was virtually to tear up the Constitution. Bismarck, however, had gauged correctly the situation. He knew that he could rely upon the army to crush armed resistance, and as a devoted partisan of the monarchy he was quite ready to employ force in its interests. Moreover, the Liberal Opposition was apparently confined to the middle classes, and the country as a whole seems to have acquiesced in the violation of its constitutional privileges. Above all, Bismarck depended upon the success of his foreign policy to overcome or to silence the hostility of his opponents. He well knew that much is forgiven to those who succeed, and that the sin which the world finds most difficult to pardon is failure. Events justified Bismarck's calculations up to the very hilt. His dazzling achievements in the field of diplomacy and war carried the nation along with him and raised him to the pinnacle of greatness. He gave to the military monarchy of Prussia a new lease of power, which only its collapse in the war of 1914-18 brought to an end. In short, Bismarck succeeded in Prussia where Strafford had failed in England, and Villèle had failed in France, because in depriving the nation of liberty he substituted glory to fill the void. "We are a vain nation," wrote Bismarck; "we feel hurt directly we cannot swagger, and much, even in regard to our pockets, is forgiven and permitted a government which gives us importance abroad."<sup>1</sup> After the battle of Sadowa in 1866 had laid Austria at the feet of Prussia, the Assembly accorded Bismarck an indemnity for having governed the country without a budget for five

<sup>1</sup> *Reflections*, i. 177.

years. In the exultation of victory, the nation forgave the unconstitutional conduct of the minister, who was henceforth assured of a majority in the Prussian Chamber in everything relating to his foreign policy.

1863  
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(2) The conflict with the Prussian Chambers was not an end in itself, but a means to an end. Bismarck was not a reactionary pure and simple, and he was willing to co-operate with the representatives of the people provided they accepted his programme abroad. Here he differed from the ministers of Charles X., who looked upon foreign enterprises only in the light of a prop to their system of government at home. With Bismarck, however, the dream of foreign aggrandizement overpowered all secondary considerations, and to the expulsion of Austria from the Confederation he now bent all his energies. At the moment of his accession to power, Prussian prospects in Germany had taken an unfavourable turn. There appeared every likelihood of an alliance between Napoleon III. and Russia; and since the former would never consent to the union of Germany under the headship of Prussia, this alliance would have ruined all Bismarck's plans. The danger was averted owing to an opportune event, from which the minister was skilful enough to reap the fullest advantage. At the beginning of 1863 the Polish insurrection broke out, and in France and England popular feeling ran high in favour of the Poles.<sup>1</sup> Bismarck promptly offered his assistance to the Russian Government; and, by massing troops on the frontier, relieved it of all anxiety as to the attitude of the European Powers. The French Emperor, on the other hand, was compelled by public opinion to protest on behalf of the Poles; and so, without benefiting Poland, he completely shattered the Franco-Russian *entente*. In its place was now substituted an agreement between Russia and Prussia, and henceforth Bismarck was assured of a free hand in dealing with Austria. His diplomacy had been bold to the point of rashness, for if France, Austria, and England had declared war upon Russia, as it seemed not unlikely, Prussia would have had to meet the first onslaught. But though his convention

(2) *Relations with Austria.*<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, Chapter VII.



1863 — with Russia deepened the hostility of Prussian Liberals, it had certainly contributed to the purpose to which Bismarck subordinated all other considerations: the overthrow of Austrian predominance in Germany.

*The  
Schleswig-  
Holstein  
question.*

The actual occasion for war between the two leading Powers of the Germanic Confederation sprang from the thorny problem of the Schleswig-Holstein duchies. These duchies, although subject to the Crown of Denmark, had maintained an independent existence for four centuries, and strenuously resisted the efforts of the Danish national party, known as the Eider-Danes, to make them an integral part of the kingdom. The situation was complicated by the fact that, while the male line of the Danish royal house appeared likely to die out, the Salic law, prohibiting succession in the female line, still prevailed in the duchies. This meant that the personal union between Denmark and the duchies would soon terminate unless the autonomy of the latter were first extinguished. A crisis was reached in 1848, when Holstein organized an insurrection against Denmark, and appealed, as a member of the Germanic Confederation, for the assistance of the German people, who espoused its cause with eagerness. Holstein and Schleswig were thus caught up in the great wave of national enthusiasm which was now sweeping over Germany; and henceforth their fate was inextricably interwoven with the destinies of the German nation. But the problem was not purely a German one; it had also a European aspect, for any attempt to dismember Denmark, and make Germany a naval power in the Baltic, was bound to raise strong opposition. Hence Prussia's intervention on behalf of the duchies was speedily cut short (Convention of Malmoe),<sup>1</sup> and a settlement, known as the London Protocol, was patched up in 1852, which recognized the integrity of the Danish monarchy, but granted a measure of autonomy to the duchies. This compromise proved unworkable, and the relations between Denmark and the Germanic Confederation grew more and more strained. Eventually, in 1863, matters came to a head. The Eider-Danes availed themselves of the fact that the

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 60.



European Powers were preoccupied with the Polish insurrection to impose on Schleswig-Holstein a Constitution which practically annihilated the independence of Schleswig, thus completely setting aside the London Protocol. This gave Bismarck an opportunity which he well knew how to turn to the benefit of Prussia. "From the beginning," he afterwards wrote, "I kept annexation steadily before my eyes"; but, at the moment, he was careful not to show his hand or reveal his ulterior aims. The events of 1848 had shown that Prussia needed an ally in the event of European interference. He therefore induced Austria, whose fears of Napoleon's Italian policy<sup>1</sup> made her anxious to cultivate the friendship of Prussia, to accept the proposal for a joint intervention in the duchies. A legitimate pretext for action was found in Denmark's violation of the Protocol, which left England, France, and Russia without legal ground for protest. War ensued, in which Denmark was beaten and deprived of the duchies (1864). At first they were administered jointly by the two Powers, an arrangement modified subsequently by the Convention of Gastein (1865), and Bismarck availed himself of the interval to secure Napoleon's neutrality and Italy's co-operation. He realized that Austria would never consent to Prussia annexing the duchies, and therefore worked steadily to bring on war. Single-handed he forced a conflict on Austria, for the Prussian people themselves desired peace, while public opinion elsewhere in Germany supported the claims of the Duke of Augustenburg as having the best hereditary right to the duchies. Austria had no option but to accept the challenge. The decisive victory of Sadowa (Königgrätz), July 1866, proved the superiority of Prussian arms over Austrian, and it was followed by the defeat of the minor German States which had thrown in their lot with Austria. Momentous changes in the German political system were now carried through by Bismarck, which brought to Prussia an enormous accession of power and laid the basis of the modern German Empire.

Bismarck resisted William's proposal to annex Austrian

<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, Chapter V.

1866  
—  
The North  
German  
Confedera-  
tion.

territory, although Venetia was ceded to Italy.<sup>1</sup> He was resolved to drive Austria out of Germany in order to leave a clear field for the aggrandizement of Prussia, but he did not wish to create any permanent barriers between the two countries which would prevent a future alliance against France and Russia. His moderation in this respect stands in striking contrast with the policy which, in 1871, wrested Alsace-Lorraine from France, and left behind it bitter memories which the passage of several decades has served only to intensify. As a result of the Peace of Prague (August 1866), Prussia added to her territories the duchies of Schleswig-Holstein, the kingdom of Hanover, the Electorate of Hesse (Hesse-Cassel), part of Hesse-Darmstadt, and the city of Frankfort. In this way she increased her population by four millions, while the Germanic Confederation, established in 1815, was dissolved, and Austria was henceforth excluded from participation in German affairs. At the same time Prussia became the head of a North German Confederation, embracing all the States north of the Main. The machinery of the new Confederation, which Bismarck now called into existence, comprised a parliamentary assembly (*Reichstag*), elected by manhood suffrage, and a federal council (*Bundesrath*), composed of deputies from the different States. In the *Bundesrath* Prussia controlled only seventeen votes out of forty-three ;<sup>2</sup> and the fact that she was nominally in the minority served to veil her actual superiority and to reconcile the smaller States to their inferior position. Bismarck could afford to make illusory concessions, since the real power in all matters of consequence was vested in the Prussian king, who commanded the armies and determined the foreign policy of all the members of the Confederation. In internal affairs each Government retained a large measure of independence, and did not merge its separate individuality in the collective unity of the Federal body. On the other hand, many problems were left vague and undefined, for Bismarck wished to proceed

<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, Chapter V.

<sup>2</sup> After the entrance of the South German States into the Confederation, the number of members in the *Bundesrath* was increased to fifty-eight: A. L. Lowell, *The Governments of France, Italy, and Germany* (1914), p. 192.

with caution. Yet, since the greater always draws the less, the Federal Government was bound to extend its sphere of legislative control and absorb fresh departments of social and political administration, to the detriment of the several States. The States south of the Main, namely Bavaria, Würtemberg, Baden, and Hesse-Darmstadt, retained their independence, but they were afraid of being annexed by Napoleon, whose claim for compensation on the Rhine Bismarck had disclosed to them. Hence they were unable to stand alone, and formed an offensive and defensive alliance with Prussia, which thus obtained control over their military forces.

(3) The war between Austria and Prussia was the first stage in the growth of the German Empire ; the second stage was the war between Prussia and France. Here, again, it is necessary to distinguish between the underlying cause of the conflict and the occasion. The dispute over the Spanish succession was not the ultimate cause of the Franco-Prussian War, any more than the Schleswig-Holstein dispute was the ultimate cause of the Austro-Prussian War. (3) *France*

It is one of the misfortunes of history that the idea of a Middle Kingdom, covering the debatable land between France and Germany, has never materialized. The empire of Charles the Great broke up after his death into three divisions: the western portion corresponding roughly to modern France, the eastern portion answering to modern Germany, and the middle portion—a straggling tract of territory, known as Lotharingia—extending across Europe and embracing Aachen, the capital of the Teutonic peoples, and Rome, the capital of the Latin peoples. Lotharingia failed, however, to survive as a 'buffer' State, and was soon absorbed by its neighbours. In the fifteenth century another attempt was made by Charles the Bold of Burgundy to build up a Middle Kingdom ; and, if his efforts had achieved success, they would have diverted the whole current of European development. But his untimely death shattered his plans, and France and Germany were left to confront each other face to face. The momentous changes, which were transforming Prussia at this period into a great military *The Middle Kingdom.*



1866-70 — Power and the head of a United Germany, could not leave France indifferent, and the clash of conflicting interests provoked the war of 1870.

*Napoleon  
III. and  
Prussia.*

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(The relations between France and Prussia had been unfriendly, ever since Napoleon I. inflicted on the latter the crushing defeat of Jena (1806). Bismarck, however, was not influenced by traditional feuds, and what he called "stagnating antipathies"; and he had no scruple in utilizing with subtle craft, any foreign Power, whose assistance at the moment might contribute directly or indirectly to the end which he so sedulously pursued. As early as 1857, he had advocated improved relations between Prussia and France; and from the moment of his accession to office five years later he had skilfully manipulated his intercourse with Napoleon, who was outwitted in diplomacy as successfully as he was afterwards outmatched in war. The French Emperor entirely misinterpreted the real drift of the political situation in Germany. His sympathies with the Italian movement led him to look upon Austria as the enemy of France, and he even courted an alliance with Prussia against the Habsburg monarchy. Overrating the military efficiency of the Austrian State, he was willing that Prussia should extend her influence in North Germany as a counterpoise to the power of her rival in the South. (Of Bismarck's ulterior designs he was completely ignorant, and he only awoke to the perception of the Prussian menace when it was too late.) He had formed vague notions of 'rectifying' the French frontier towards the Rhine, and he also wished to carve out for himself in Germany a position like that of Napoleon I., who had formed the lesser German States into a Confederation of the Rhine under French control. (The aim of his policy was, therefore, to keep Germany weak and disunited, and to prevent either Austria or Prussia from obtaining the preponderance.) Accordingly, upon the outbreak of the Austro-Prussian War he observed strict neutrality, but the victory of Sadowa speedily upset all his calculations. (He had confidently expected that the struggle would be protracted, and that both sides would become exhausted, after which he would intervene as umpire and

dictate terms.) Yet even Sadowa did not completely dispel his illusions. He raised no protest against the expansion of the Prussian kingdom, for in some aggrandizement of Prussia in North Germany he saw not only no danger to France, but even a means against the unification and national development of Germany. He believed that the non-Prussian portions of Germany would then feel a greater need for French support. 1866-70

(On his part the Prussian statesman welcomed Napoleon's misconceptions, because he wished to postpone the outbreak of war until he had completed his military preparations, and was anxious not to embark upon the struggle with France precipitately. But while delaying the issue, his programme from the first was clearly mapped out in his mind. He was convinced that "a United Germany was only a question of time, that the North German Confederation was only the first step in its solution." He was equally persuaded that "a Franco-German war must take place before the construction of a United Germany could be realized." <sup>1</sup> "That a war with France would succeed that with Austria," he afterwards declared, "lay in the logic of history." He needed a war to complete the fabric of the German Empire for two main reasons. In the first place, he knew that France would strenuously resist all efforts to unite Germany under Prussian leadership; it was, indeed, owing to Napoleon's intervention after Sadowa that Bismarck had been compelled to proceed with caution and to moderate his demands upon Austria. In the second place, the reluctance of South German princes to enter the Confederation could only be overcome if the whole people of Germany were carried away by a fresh national impulse. "The German national feeling south of the Main, aroused by our military successes in 1866, and shown by the readiness of the southern States to enter the alliances, would grow cold again." <sup>2</sup> The gulf which dynastic influences and different habits of life had created in the course of history between the north and south of Germany could not be more effectually bridged over, so Bismarck supposed, "than by

*Causes of  
the Franco  
Prussian  
War  
(1870).*

<sup>1</sup> *Reflections*, ii. 57.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 97.

1870-71 — a joint national war against the neighbour who had been aggressive for many years." Events played into his hands, for in France also powerful influences were at work impelling the nation towards war. All parties were violently incensed at the aggrandizement of Prussia, and the supporters of Napoleon considered a successful war necessary to retrieve his tarnished fortunes and secure his dynasty. The growing tension of public opinion in France and Germany could only have been relieved by a cordial *rapprochement* between their rulers. But there was no possibility of this, and a single spark sufficed to set the two countries aflame. When a Government is resolved on war, it is never at a loss for a pretext; and a dispute over the succession to the Spanish throne, which was almost on the point of a satisfactory settlement, was the immediate occasion of the Franco-Prussian War. The battle of Sedan, fought on September 1, 1870, was followed by the capitulation of Metz (October 27), when one hundred and seventy thousand men laid down their arms, and later by the fall of Paris (January 28, 1871) after a siege of four months. As a result of the war<sup>1</sup> Germany not only acquired Alsace and eastern Lorraine, including Metz and Strassburg, but she also accomplished the purpose for which Bismarck had embarked upon the struggle with France, namely, the incorporation of the States south of the Main in the North German Confederation. On January 18, 1871, the King of Prussia was crowned at Versailles German Emperor, and the ceremony symbolized in the eyes of the world the newly-born unity of the German people.

The  
Zollverein.

Bismarck built up the political fabric of the German Empire, but the foundations of a United Germany had already been laid by the *Zollverein* (Customs Union). Economic unity paved the way for political unity, and community of material interests stimulated the growth of national feeling and fostered national consciousness. The starting-point of the *Zollverein* lay in the financial reforms initiated by Maassen in 1818, in accordance with the principles of Adam Smith. In order to unite the scattered

<sup>1</sup> On the effects of the Franco-Prussian War, see *infra*, Chapter VIII.



provinces of Prussia, he created a new tariff system which abolished all internal customs and established free trade throughout Prussian territory. In the case of foreign imports a moderate tariff was levied on manufactured goods, but no tariff whatever was imposed on raw materials. On the other hand, transport duties on commodities conveyed through Prussia were made very high in order to compel other States to enter the Customs Union. This policy was fatal to the independence of the secondary States, which were confronted with economic ruin if they endeavoured to hold aloof from the Prussian system; for not only did the scattered territories of Prussia completely envelop a number of German principalities, but through them passed the chief commercial routes of Germany. Prussia, however, refused to take heed of the outcry raised against her, while Austria—failing to grasp the immense issues involved—remained passive. Rival commercial unions were formed, but the liberal terms offered by Prussia under the far-sighted direction of Motz, the minister of finance after 1825, gradually broke down all opposition, and one State after another attached itself to her Union. In 1834 the important States of Bavaria, Würtemberg, and Saxony entered the *Zollverein*, and the system eventually extended over the whole of Germany. The exclusion of Austria, owing to her protectionist policy, deprived her of any voice in the commercial policy of Germany, and left Prussia without a rival to challenge her predominance. In this way the quiet, but incessant, pressure of economic forces broke down the political barriers which divided Germany, and helped to eliminate the various territorial and dynastic influences which worked towards separation. //

In concluding this survey of the German national movement in the nineteenth century, it will be of interest to compare Bismarck, the maker of modern Germany, with Cavour, the maker of modern Italy.<sup>1</sup> The comparison serves to reveal striking points of resemblance and no less striking points of dissimilarity. Both had the same end in view; the one sought the unity of Germany, and the other the

*Comparison of  
Bismarck  
and  
Cavour.*

<sup>1</sup> On Cavour, see *infra*, Chapter V.

1852-70 — unity of Italy. Both were confronted by the same foe : Austria was the obstacle to the expansion of Prussia no less than to the expansion of Piedmont. In each case consummate statecraft overcame apparently insuperable difficulties, and achieved surprising success. Here, however, the resemblance ends. The differences in the main were twofold. In the first place, Cavour was a Liberal and Bismarck was a reactionary. The former was the leader of the constitutional party in Piedmont, the cardinal tenet of his political faith being the belief in free institutions. Although he necessarily employed force to expel Austria from the Peninsula the unification of Italy was essentially a popular movement, and it was based upon a series of plebiscites. The people worked hand in hand with the monarchy for the attainment of their national aspirations. Bismarck, on the other hand, was a reactionary. He appears to have believed that force, rather than ideas, constitutes the basis of government, and he built up a strong military monarchy in Prussia upon the ruins of the parliamentary system. Thus the German Empire which he established rested upon the sword, and its foundations were a series of compacts between the different Governments : in short, it was a Federal State. In the second place, Cavour was content to merge Piedmont in Italy, while Bismarck could never be brought to sink Prussian individuality in a German national State. We may express the difference by saying that Italy absorbed Piedmont, whereas Prussia absorbed Germany. This was another element of weakness in the German political system, for Prussia's predominance aroused resentment among the other members of the union. When Cavour died, his work was substantially complete ; Bismarck left behind him problems which necessarily gave rise to uncertainty as to the destiny of the structure which he created. The course of events since Bismarck seems to warrant the conclusion that the spirit in which he worked, and the methods which he employed, gave a wholly false direction to German political development.

## Note

originally there were six  
maps in this book, but unfortunately some naughty and dandy boys or girls, had kidnaped these maps. Among six maps, there are only 2. Two and a half maps, rest had been stolen. They not only had kidnaped library authorities but they made it very difficult for us and coming generation to understand fully what the position is at that time actually ~~was~~ was position in Europe when our period is at started.

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Dupeyron





## CHAPTER III

### THE REFORM MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA

(1815-1914)

AT the opening of the nineteenth century Russia was still a semi-Asiatic Power. The successive waves of Tartar hordes had left behind them a residuum of barbarism, which for centuries arrested the normal development of the Russian people. Peter the Great, who reigned from 1682 to 1725, was the first to take in hand the herculean task of raising Russia to the level of Western civilization; unfortunately he found no successor to carry on his work. Catharine the Great (1762-1796) enhanced the European status of her kingdom and made it a factor of the greatest weight in foreign politics, but she did not attempt to grapple with the really vital problems of internal reconstruction. In the nineteenth century itself one great achievement, the emancipation of the serfs, stands to the credit of Alexander II. In other respects, the interest of Russian history during this period lies in the gradual awakening of all the best elements in Russian society to the overwhelming need for the social and political regeneration of their country. The slow permeation of constitutional ideas made the past century a seed-time, of which the true harvest has yet to be reaped. Hence the keynote to Russian history is to be found in the incessant struggle between the forces of progress and reaction, and while the latter repeatedly gained the upper hand, the subterranean workings of Liberalism nevertheless undermined the whole fabric of the czarist regime. Russia, emerging slowly and painfully from her mediæval bondage, stood at the outbreak of the war of 1914-18 upon the

1815

—  
*The place  
of the nine  
teenth  
century in  
Russian  
history.*

1815 — threshold of a new life ; and it was believed that the conflict was bound to react favourably upon the internal situation.<sup>1</sup> The course of events developed on lines that were not foreseen, as will be shown in a subsequent chapter<sup>2</sup>; but a survey of the condition of Russia in the years 1815–1914 remains an indispensable preliminary to the understanding of her problems.

Condition  
of Russia  
in 1815.  
(a) Serf-  
dom.

Of these problems the most pressing in 1815 was the bondage of the Russian peasant. At the time of the Emancipation (1861), Russia contained nearly forty-nine and a half million serfs, of whom twenty-three millions belonged to the Crown and an equal number to private landlords, the rest being attached either to the Church and other institutions, or employed in domestic service.<sup>3</sup> The position of the peasants on the royal demesne was infinitely more tolerable than that of serfs held in private ownership. They were grouped together in village communities (*mir*) where they enjoyed a certain measure of local self-government, regulating their concerns through the village elder and an elected council. They suffered from various disabilities, restrictions being imposed on their movements, and on their right to acquire property and dispose of their belongings ; but their main grievance was the heavy burden laid upon them in the shape of illegal taxes, the extortion of bribes, and the exaction of forced labour. The terrible condition of the serfs under private landlords, on the other hand, may be inferred from the statement of a Russian patriot, in 1826, that " the negroes on the American plantations were happier than the Russian private serfs." Their owners, being as a rule insolvent, were wont to sell their serfs like cattle, even separating members of one family, and exacting from those who remained extra dues and labour. The Russian law of serfage stated that " the proprietor may impose on his serfs every kind of labour, may take from them money dues, and demand from them personal service." He could also inflict corporal punishment, hand them over as conscripts to the

<sup>1</sup> " The triumph of the common cause of European democracy will at the same time be the triumph of our own " : G. Alexinsky, *Russia and the Great War* (1915), 357. <sup>2</sup> See *Europe* 1914–39.

<sup>3</sup> A. Rambaud, *Histoire de la Russie* (ed. 1900), 677.



military authorities, or transport them to Siberia.<sup>1</sup> An appalling picture is drawn by a recent historian: "The peasants of the smaller proprietors were subject to direct oppression at the hands of their masters; but those of the great nobles, who lived in St. Petersburg, suffered not less severely at the hands of their stewards and tenants. They perished by hundreds in the factories established, at this period, to augment the incomes of these great landed proprietors. They were also subjected to inhuman punishments, imprisoned in underground cellars, kept in chains, or flogged to death with the knout, by order of the master or his steward. A whole series of such crimes were brought to light . . . on the properties of the highest dignitaries of State—men who enjoyed in St. Petersburg the reputation of statesmen and even of philanthropists."<sup>2</sup> Catharine the Great, a princess of German origin, and the correspondent of Voltaire and the Encyclopædists, deprived the serfs of all legal rights, and ordered that those who ventured to seek redress against their masters should be punished with the knout and transported for life to the mines (1767).<sup>3</sup> It is worth while to contrast the humane precept regarding the English serf laid down by Bracton six hundred years before the Russian Edict of Emancipation. "Serfs," wrote the great English jurist, "have a personal right of action in court *against all persons* for injuries done to themselves."<sup>4</sup>

The internal administration of Russia at this period defies description: "Everything was corrupt, everything unjust, everything dishonest." How could it be otherwise? Every office in the State was open either to influence or to the highest bidder, without any regard to the competence of the candidate. Bribery, a vice usually inherent in all Eastern administrations, existed everywhere; it was rendered worse by the fact that practically all the officials throughout the Empire were paid inadequate salaries. The military governors of the provinces accumulated immense fortunes by fleecing the people, and their example was

(b) *Internal  
adminis-  
tration.*

<sup>1</sup> See D. M. Wallace, *Russia* (ed. 1912), c. xxviii.

<sup>2</sup> S. Askenazy, "Russia" in *Camb. Mod. Hist.* x. 426-7.

<sup>3</sup> Wallace, *op. cit.* 473.

<sup>4</sup> E. Lipson, *Economic History* (1915), i. 42.

1815 — zealously followed by their subordinates, each according to his degree. We have to turn to the Oration where Cicero depicts the condition of Sicily under the rule of Roman pro-consuls, to find an adequate parallel to the state of affairs in Russia where the venality of the officials was a byword. The people found it useless to complain, since a change of governors effected no change in their situation. It was impossible to get justice in any civil court from the highest to the lowest, without bribery; and the malversation of public funds was a normal practice.

*Discontent  
of Russian  
nobles.*

The French Revolution broke out in France, not because the economic abuses were greater there than elsewhere in Europe, but owing to the growth of an enlightened middle class whose discontent with the existing regime had been fostered by the writings of the 'Philosophers.' In Russia, on the other hand, there was no middle class, saturated with Liberal ideas, to lead the revolt against the Government; and the peasants themselves were too cowed to furnish leaders from their midst. But in the years immediately following the Napoleonic wars their cause found champions in unexpected quarters. The nobility had their own grounds for dissatisfaction with the Government. The situation was parallel, in some respects, to that which prevailed in Prussia about the same period, for in both countries there was deep-rooted hostility between the nobles and the centralized bureaucracy. The former resented the preponderance of the official class in whose hands now lay the complete direction of State affairs, and in the case of the Russian nobles this ill-feeling was intensified by the fact that men of German birth were filling public posts. Hence, while professing outward loyalty to the monarchy, they were not disinclined to welcome attacks upon the existing order. Moreover the officers of the army, who were recruited from the ranks of the nobility, returned to Russia—after a protracted campaign in Western Europe—with a broader and more sympathetic outlook as the result of impressions gained during their three years' residence in France. Just as the American Revolution laid the foundations of the French Revolution, so the contrast between the

degradation of Russia with her servile population and lack of free institutions on the one hand, and the condition of France on the other, planted the seeds of revolution in many Russian hearts. "The ideas of constitutional monarchy and ideas of revolution," wrote a distinguished Russian officer, Colonel Paul Pestel, in his Autobiography, "then began to spring up in me; as yet the latter were still weak and obscure, but gradually they became stronger and more distinct. . . . From ideas of constitutional monarchy I passed to republican ideas."<sup>1</sup> As the instrument of their ideas, and the vehicle of their propaganda, they formed secret societies, adopting a method of organization particularly prevalent at this time in Southern Europe, where the *Carbonari* in Italy, and the *Hetairia* in Greece, were almost the only channels of political activity. Tentative experiments resulted, in 1818, in a society known as the Union of Public Good, which after three years broke up into two separate bodies: the Society of the North and the Society of the South. The former drew its members from the army stationed at Petrograd, and its programme was that of constitutional monarchy. The latter was recruited from the army in the south, and favoured a republic. A third society, afterwards amalgamated with the Society of the South, was that of the United Slavs, which advocated a federation of all the Slavonic peoples. But the members of all these societies were, as a writer at the time observed, "a generation without fathers and sons," and they shared the fate of all pioneers who live in advance of their age. Drawing their inspiration from the freer atmosphere of Western life, and cherishing a generous passion for freedom, they were never more than a mere handful of patriots, isolated among contemporaries not yet ripe for their ideas. But while their failure was thus rendered inevitable, they left behind them memories of self-sacrifice, which will always give them a place in Russian history.

The interregnum which followed the death of Alexander I. (1825) afforded the secret societies an opportunity to assert themselves. Alexander left three brothers, of whom Con-

1815-25

*The Decembrist movement* (1825).

<sup>1</sup> Cited in Lavissee et Rambaud, *Histoire Générale*, t. x. 147.



1825

stantine, the eldest and therefore next in succession, had been induced by the Emperor to renounce his claim in favour of a younger brother, Nicholas. His sacrifice involved the succession in some uncertainty, for it was doubtful whether his renunciation was really valid. The period of suspense lasted three weeks, after which Nicholas ascended the throne in Constantine's place; but meanwhile all the elements of disaffection had been gathering strength, and the secret societies seized the occasion for a revolutionary outbreak. On December 26 an insurrection broke out in Petrograd, where the Moscow regiment, at the instigation of its officers, refused to take the oath to the new Emperor. The rising speedily proved a complete fiasco; it was purely a military revolt, confined practically to a single regiment, and neither the official classes nor the people of the capital had any part in it. Moreover it was badly organized, and its leaders showed themselves unequal to the emergency. A mutiny provoked by the Southern Society was suppressed with even greater ease, and everywhere the embers of revolt were rigorously stamped out. A commission of investigation sat to inquire into the ramifications of the conspiracy, and men of the highest distinction "in letters, arts and political philosophy," and "the *élite*," as it was said, "of all that was civilized and truly noble in Russia," were condemned to exile in Siberia. Some even perished by an ignominious death; among them, Paul Pestel. "My error has been," he said on the scaffold, "that I tried to gather the harvest before I sowed the seed." "I knew beforehand," declared another patriot, "that our enterprise had no chance of success. I knew also that I must make a sacrifice of my life. . . . The harvest-hour will come later." The Decembrist movement, as it was called, thus came to an untimely end. The political inexperience of its authors threw away in one rash unorganized outburst the work of many years of preparation, and involved in fatal disaster the cause for which they had so long laboured. The programme they contemplated—equality before the law, the emancipation of serfs, a constitutional regime—deserved indeed a better fate. Yet their sacrifices were not made

altogether in vain. The blood of martyrs waters the seeds of liberty, and the Decembrists had shown that the sufferings of the Russian people did not pass unheeded, but were capable of raising up patriots willing to pour out their blood for the regeneration of their country. 1825-55

The accession of Nicholas I., the incarnation of absolutism, inaugurated a new epoch. The catastrophe with which his reign opened moulded the character of his rule, and for thirty years he governed Russia with remorseless severity. Autocracy had triumphed over constitutional principles, and it spared no effort to entrench itself in an unassailable position. At a time when the countries of Western Europe were convulsed by the titanic conflict of Liberalism and Reaction, Russia presented to the world an appearance of absolute immobility. Abroad, Nicholas was the energetic champion of Autocracy and the relentless enemy of all progressive movements. In 1830 he was only prevented by the Polish insurrection from intervening in France on behalf of the exiled Bourbon King; in 1848 he came to the assistance of the Emperor of Austria, and was responsible for the collapse of the Hungarian revolution. At home he pursued a policy of resolute repression, adopting an attitude of rigid conservatism and controlling with iron rigour all popular manifestations. His fanatical system of government effectually blocked up every avenue to freedom of thought and action. The secret police, abolished by his more humane predecessor, was immediately revived (1826), and their infamous record as the *Third Section of the Tsar's Private Chancellery* fills one of the darkest pages in Russian history. The head of the Section, the Chief of Police, possessed unlimited powers of "arresting, imprisoning, deporting, and making away with anyone whom he pleased, without any restriction whatever." This terrible institution, it has been said, "rivalled, if it did not exceed, the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition." Like his prototype, Philip II of Spain, Nicholas sought to protect his subjects as much as possible from contact with European influences and Western ideas, which might unsettle their political convictions and introduce the leaven of revolutionary thought among an unsophisti-

Nicholas  
I. (1825-  
1855).



1825-55 cated people. Accordingly, restrictions were imposed on foreign travel ; the youth of Russia were forbidden to study abroad ; and foreign publications were not admitted into the Empire without first undergoing rigorous scrutiny from the censor. Even the attendance of students at Russian Universities was discouraged, and the teaching of philosophy was expunged from the University curriculum and confided to ecclesiastics ; like mediæval scholasticism, it became once more a branch of theological study. To fetter the human mind, and to check the spread of unfavourable criticism of the Government, the censorship of the press was armed with extensive powers. " The utterance of an unguarded word, the possession of a forbidden book, might at any time lead to exile in a distant government, or in Siberia itself, practically without either trial or appeal." Thus reaction was the keynote of the Imperial administration ; and throughout his reign Nicholas, never faltering in his ruthless repression of all the forces of progress and enlightenment, set his face resolutely against the irresistible stream of humanity.

*Comparison of  
Nicholas  
I. and  
Philip II.*

A comparison of Nicholas I. with Philip II. of Spain not only reveals striking resemblances, but enables us to grasp the fundamental defect of their methods of government. Nicholas, like Philip, was an anachronism in the generation in which he lived. He was the ' Don Quixote of Autocracy,' fanatically opposed to the spirit of his age, and fighting with unyielding tenacity for a worn-out ideal. Throughout Europe he was the indomitable foe of Democracy, just as the Spanish monarchy in the sixteenth century was the sworn enemy of the Reformation. Each employed similar instruments, the one the Inquisition, the other the Third Section ; and they made their realms ' intellectual quarantines ' in order to isolate them from the disintegrating influence of European thought. But the real strength of the monarchical structure in Russia, as in Spain, lay in the apathetic indifference and unquestioning loyalty of their subjects ; and this was also the source of its weakness, for the structure was bound to crumble to pieces once the nation awakened to political consciousness. This awakening was delayed in Russia until 1855, when the Crimean



War had the same effects upon her people which the destruction of the Spanish Armada had upon Spain ; shattering their faith in the existing regime and in their own invincibility. For nearly half a century Russia had cherished the memory of Napoleon's disastrous retreat from Moscow, and the Autocracy found in its military prestige abroad its best justification for the oppression it carried on at home. The campaign in the Crimea dispelled at one blow all the illusions which the Russian people had entertained since 1812. The abuses of the administration were laid bare before their eyes, and Russia now paid the penalty for the fatal incompetence of her bureaucracy. An English traveller in Russia, writing a few years after the conclusion of the Crimean War, has described its effects upon the educated classes in these words :

“ In spite of the efforts of the Government to suppress all unpleasant intelligence, it soon became known that the military organization was little, if at all, better than the civil administration—that the individual bravery of soldiers and officers was neutralized by the incapacity of the generals, the venality of the officials, and the shameless speculation of the commissariat department. The Emperor, it was said, had drilled out of the officers all energy, individuality, and moral force. Almost the only men who showed judgment, decision, and energy, were the officers of the Black Sea fleet, which had been less subjected to the prevailing system. As the struggle went on, it became evident how weak the country really was—how deficient in the resources necessary to sustain a prolonged conflict. ‘ Another year of war,’ writes an eye-witness in 1855, ‘ and the whole of Southern Russia will be ruined.’ . . . Militia regiments were everywhere raised throughout the country, and many proprietors spent large sums in equipping volunteer corps ; but very soon this enthusiasm cooled when it was found that the patriotic efforts enriched the jobbers without inflicting any serious injury on the enemy. Under the sting of the great national humiliation, the upper classes awoke from their optimistic resignation. They had borne patiently the oppression of a semi-military administration, and for

1855

*Russia  
and the  
Crimean  
War.*

1855

— this! The system of Nicholas had been put to a crucial test, and found wanting. The policy which had sacrificed all to increase the military power of the Empire was seen to be a fatal error, and the worthlessness of the drill-sergeant regime was proved by bitter experience. Those administrative fetters which had for more than a quarter of a century cramped every spontaneous effort had failed to fulfil even the narrow purpose for which they had been forged. They had, indeed, secured a certain external tranquillity," but, "*this tranquillity was not that of healthy normal action, but of death*—and underneath the surface lay secret and rapidly-spreading corruption." In spite of the gallantry of the Russian soldier, "the result was now not victory, but defeat. How could this be explained except by the radical defects of that system which had been long practised with such inflexible perseverance? The Government had imagined that it could do everything by its own wisdom and energy, and in reality it had done nothing, or worse than nothing." <sup>1</sup>

Discontent  
of the  
educated  
classes.

After thirty years of stagnation and passive endurance the discontent of the educated classes began once again to rear its head. The censorship of the press acted as a restraint upon printed publications, but it could not prevent manuscript literature circulating from hand to hand. One specimen, which was widely circulated, has been printed by Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, and its keen satire on the administration of Nicholas reflects in vivid terms the profound change which was taking place in Russian public opinion.

Criticism  
of the  
Autocracy.

" 'God has placed me over Russia,' said the Tsar to us, 'and you must bow down before me, for my throne is His altar. Trouble not yourselves with public affairs, for I think for you and watch over you every hour. My watchful eye detects internal evils and the machinations of foreign enemies; and I have no need of counsel, for God inspires me with wisdom. Be proud, therefore, of being my slaves, O Russians, and regard my will as your law.'

" We listened to these words with deep reverence, and

<sup>1</sup> Wallace, *Russia*, 444-5.

gave a tacit consent ; and what was the result ? Under mountains of official papers real interests were forgotten. The letter of the law was observed, but negligence and crime were allowed to go unpunished. While grovelling in the dust before ministers . . . the officials stole unblushingly ; and theft became so common that he who stole the most was the most respected. The merits of officers were decided at reviews ; and he who obtained the rank of General was supposed capable of becoming at once an able governor, an excellent engineer, or a most wise senator. Those who were appointed governors were for the most part genuine satraps, the scourges of the provinces entrusted to their care. The other offices were filled up with as little attention to the merits of the candidates. A stable-boy became Press Censor ! An Imperial fool became Admiral ! . . .

1855  
—

“ And what did we Russians do all this time ?

“ We Russians slept ! With groans the peasant paid his yearly dues ; with groans the proprietor mortgaged the second half of his estate ; groaning, we all paid our heavy tribute to the officials. Occasionally, with a grave shaking of the head, we remarked in a whisper that it was a shame and a disgrace—that there was no justice in the courts—that millions were squandered on Imperial tours, kiosks, and pavilions—that everything was wrong ; and then, with an easy conscience, we . . . squabbled with each other for advancement in the very service which we so severely condemned. . . . If any one, amidst the general lethargy, suddenly called upon us to rise and fight for the truth and for Russia, how ridiculous did he appear ! . . . Under the anathema of public opinion, in some distant Siberian mine he recognized what a heinous sin it was to disturb the heavy sleep of apathetic slaves. . . .

“ But amidst all this we had at least one consolation, one thing to be proud of—the might of Russia. . . . And lo ! after all our boasting we were taken by surprise, and caught unawares. . . .

“ Awake, O Russia ! Devoured by foreign enemies, crushed by slavery, shamefully oppressed by stupid authorities and spies, awaken from your long sleep of ignorance and



1855 — apathy! . . . Stand forward calmly before the throne of the despot, and demand from him an account of the national disaster.”<sup>1</sup>

Alexander  
II. (1855-  
1881).

The reform period of Russian history set in with the accession of Alexander II., who came to the throne during the Crimean War (1855). The new Emperor was not, like his predecessor, ‘a crowned drill-sergeant,’ and the character of his administration was from the outset more humane and enlightened. Thus, at the moment when the blood of the Russian people was coursing more freely through their veins, their destinies were placed in the hands of one who was no reactionary, but recognized fully the fundamental need for constructive statesmanship. Alexander’s preliminary measures seemed intended to pave the way for the complete reversion of his father’s policy. The survivors of the Decembrist movement were allowed to return home after thirty years of exile, and other political offenders were also pardoned. At the same time the disabilities laid by Nicholas on the Universities, and the restrictions imposed upon foreign travel, were removed. These concessions were received by the Russian people with boundless enthusiasm. After the wintry rigour of the old regime, the mildness of the new reign gave promise of the dawn of spring. The wildest hopes were entertained, and men recked little of the rocks with which the path of progress is ever strewn. The censorship was relaxed, and the press flooded with Utopian schemes which an enlightened autocrat, imbued with the reforming spirit of eighteenth-century philosophy, was to carry into operation by the mere stroke of the pen. “We have to thank the war,” it was said, “for opening our eyes to the dark sides of our political and social organization, and it is now our duty to profit by the lesson.” A leading newspaper expressed the conviction that Russia would “accomplish peacefully and without effort not only those great reforms which cost Europe centuries of struggle and bloodshed, but also many which the nations of the West are still unable to accomplish, in consequence of feudal traditions and caste prejudices.” It is worth while to

<sup>1</sup> Wallace, *op. cit.* 446-8.

observe that, at this period, the prevailing sentiment throughout Russia was apparently in no way anti-monarchical. On the contrary, the eyes of the nation were turned to the Tsar as the fountain-head from whom were to flow spontaneously all the benefits so eagerly anticipated. The Nihilist movement was as yet unborn; and there was a widespread and genuine belief that all classes of the community would co-operate loyally in social reforms, and vie with one another in a generous rivalry of self-sacrifice. Nor were these hopes entirely disappointed, for the new era was ushered in by an event second in importance only to the French Revolution.

Alexander's most memorable achievement was the emancipation of the Russian peasant. All reformers were agreed that the abolition of serfdom was the indispensable starting-point of national regeneration. The existence of a large servile population, comprising nearly one half the nation, created an atmosphere which debased all sense of human dignity and stifled every generous instinct. It was, indeed, a fundamental cause of the inertia and stagnation of Russian life, alike in its moral, intellectual, and material aspects. Serfdom was also a menace to the security of the established order, and the danger of a slave war was always present to the mind of the Government, as in the ancient world it had been to the rulers of Rome. The peasants had never ceased to claim their freedom from the time when Peter III. (1762) released the nobility from the obligation to serve in the army. They held that their own emancipation ought to have followed as the corollary of Peter's action, since the only historical justification for their bondage lay in the services which the State in former days had exacted from their masters. The reign of Nicholas had witnessed a succession of revolts, which served to bring home to every section of society that the emancipation of the serfs was a measure no less demanded in the interests of self-preservation than in the name of humanity. Upon the conclusion of peace in 1856, Alexander immediately disclosed his intention to take the problem of serfdom in hand. "We live in such an age," he publicly warned the nobility, "that in time it

1856

*The  
Emanci-  
pation of  
the serfs.*



1861 — cannot but take place. In this, I think you too agree with me. Consequently, it is better for it to come from above than from below." The task of reconciling divergent interests and propitiating opposition made progress slow, but the Emperor was resolved to accomplish his purpose, and in 1861 the Edict of Emancipation abolished serfdom and liberated over forty millions of the Russian people at one stroke. The importance of this Edict in the history of Russia makes it necessary to give some account of its main principles, and to estimate the nature of its influence upon rural society. First of all, however, we must bear in mind that, while the disappearance of servitude in England was due to the gradual operation of economic forces, in Russia it was the result of conscious legislation. On this account it is more difficult to determine its effects, for legal activity generally achieves much less than we commonly suppose, and tends very often to leave the economic situation only slightly modified. There was unquestionably an immense gain to Russia from the moral standpoint, though even here it must be remembered that the Russian peasant, caring primarily about his material position, did not concern himself greatly about questions of status. But when we attempt to gauge the economic significance of the Emancipation the complexity of the problem forbids facile generalizations.

*Effects of  
the Eman-  
cipation.*

The Edict was based on three principles. In the first place it endowed the Russian serf with civil rights, conferring upon him the status of a free peasant, and releasing him from servile bondage to his master. In the second place it divided the ownership of the soil between the nobles and the peasants, in order to prevent the expropriation of the peasantry and the growth of a landless proletariat. Admiration of Western civilization did not blind Russian thinkers to its defects, and they recognized the danger of transplanting its institutions to Russia without guarding against their abuses. The condition of the serf who was liberated from legal bondage and allowed to sink into economic bondage as a homeless labourer would be not better, but far worse than before. While nominally free,



he would be grounded down by the millstones of poverty, and become an easy prey to capitalist exploitation. It is very often assumed that the terms 'economic progress' and 'social welfare' express ideas which are necessarily complementary. But economic progress is sometimes achieved at the expense of social welfare, for the interests of a class are frequently at variance with those of society. The eighteenth century, for example, witnessed a great development in English agriculture, but it also saw the ruin of the English yeomanry. To make the Russian peasant like the English agricultural labourer would have secured to landed proprietors an abundant supply of cheap labour, and might have stimulated production, but its social effects would have been disastrous in the extreme. Hence the outstanding feature of the Emancipation was not primarily the removal of legal disqualifications, important though these were, but the transformation of the serf into a free peasant proprietor, owning as a shareholder in the village community the land that he occupied. This meant an invasion of 'the sacred rights of property,' and it is to the credit of the Russian nobles that they did not resist a measure which at one stroke deprived them both of compulsory labour and of a large portion of their estates. The quantity of land to be ceded by the proprietors was not fixed by law, but determined in each case by magistrates specially appointed to act as arbitrators between the serfs and the landowners. These magistrates, called Arbiters of the Peace, were themselves local proprietors, and to their impartiality and patience the success of the difficult task with which they were charged was largely due. Incidentally they showed that Russia contained men well fitted by their honourable conduct and loyal sense of duty to take part in the government of their country. In the redistribution of the soil, the prevailing idea was that the village community should retain as much land as it actually occupied at the time of the Emancipation. As compensation the landowner was to receive certain yearly payments, for which all the members of the rural commune shared the liability. The third principle embodied in the Edict of Emancipation

1861 — was that the Government should enable the village communities to redeem their annual dues by advancing to the proprietors a sum equivalent to their capitalized value, obtaining in return from the communes interest at six per cent. for a period covering forty-nine years. It must be observed that the ownership of the property ceded by the landowner was vested not in individual peasants—except in the West of Russia—but in the village community as a whole. In short, the control of the commune was substituted for the authority of the lord. Whatever the drawbacks of this system, it enabled the Government to impose the responsibility for the collection of redemption dues on the entire peasant body, and it also served as a precaution against the expropriation of individual peasants by wealthy landowners.

*Criticism  
of the  
Edict.*

The sweeping character of these changes in the legal condition of the Russian peasantry may easily lead us to misinterpret their immediate social and economic importance. On the surface it appeared as though the structure of rural society had been completely revolutionized; the old landmarks had been obliterated; the old relationships had been destroyed. In reality the position of the peasants was not radically improved; and it continued to remain very unsatisfactory. The terms of their emancipation, so far from awakening their enthusiasm, provoked profound discontent. They found themselves burdened with new taxes—often in excess of the normal rent of their land—which were not only a heavy drain upon their exiguous resources, but were also considered a grave injustice. They had always looked upon the land they occupied as their own, and historically their view seems well founded. Of course they had to work on their lord's estate; and no doubt lawyers represented their labour in the light of a rent, which proved that the serf was always a tenant, and never an owner. But this obligation, as we have seen, was actually a relic of the time when the State had exacted services from nobles and peasants alike. Hence the peasants expected their emancipation from compulsory labour to take place without the substitution of other burdens, the

nobles having no claim to compensation beyond the release already granted to them from compulsory military service. Whether we admit the justice of this contention or not, it is at any rate incontestable that the pressure of land dues, often more irksome than the old labour dues, was a primary cause in retarding their economic development. The abolition of serfdom, in spite of its important legal consequences, failed to achieve adequate amelioration in the lot of the Russian peasant. As he himself expressed it, his new situation was "both better and worse": he was relieved of certain disabilities, but in one form or another he was also burdened with fresh anxieties and obligations. The effects of the Emancipation upon the land-owning classes varied in different parts of the country, but one result everywhere was to compel them to put their houses in order, adopt more economical practices, and give more serious attention to the administration of their estates. "Formerly we kept no accounts and drank champagne," said one of the nobles; "now we keep accounts and content ourselves with beer."<sup>1</sup>

1864  
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The reign of Alexander II. was also distinguished for reforms in the law courts and in local administration. A commission appointed to examine the judicial system found that it contained no less than twenty-five radical defects, and it was therefore replaced by new institutions modelled on Western ideas. The principles of English and French jurisprudence were introduced (1864), namely, the separation of judicial and administrative powers, independence of the magistrates, oral procedure, and trial by jury. Justices of the Peace, chosen by popular election, were instituted to deal with minor cases, and an appeal could be made from the decisions of individual magistrates to the Monthly Sessions, corresponding to our own Quarter Sessions, and comprising all the Justices of the district. More important matters were reserved for the Regular Tribunals, composed of trained judges appointed by the Crown; here also appeals could be carried from the Ordinary Courts to the Courts of Appeal. At the same time Alexander instituted a system

*Reforms in  
the law  
courts and  
local  
govern-  
ment.*

<sup>1</sup> Wallace, *op. cit.* 520.



1864  
—

of local self-government in the central provinces of the Empire, based upon the principle of decentralization and provincial autonomy. There already existed in Russia various local bodies: (1) the assemblies of the nobility with the right to lay grievances before the Government; and (2) the assemblies of the peasants, the *mir* or village community, and the *volost* or canton. The new councils now brought together representatives of all three classes of the community, the nobles, the peasants, and the burghers. The District Council was appointed by popular election, and the Provincial Council, or *Zemstvo*, was elected by the District Councils. Their functions were to elect the Justices of the Peace, repair roads and bridges, supervise primary education and sanitation, and take measures against famine; but their activities were restricted owing to the power of the Governor of the province to veto their decisions, and by the lack of adequate financial resources. In all these directions—the abolition of serfdom, the reform of the judicature, and the introduction of a limited measure of local self-government—the early years of Alexander's reign marked an epoch in the assimilation of Russian life to the conditions of Western Europe.

Reaction.

It was the irony of fate that, in spite of his great achievements, Alexander was destined to witness in his own lifetime the birth of revolutionary Nihilism. There is a remarkable contrast between the enthusiasm displayed at the beginning of his reign, and the gloom which clouded its end. After ten years of agrarian, judicial, and administrative reforms, the Government plunged once more into reaction, and many of the excesses which had disfigured the administration of Nicholas I. began to reappear. This alternation of expectation and disappointment unsettled the *moral* of the educated classes, destroying their faith in Autocracy, and driving them headlong into the arms of violent extremists. The causes of this revolution in public sentiment will serve to explain the origin of the Nihilist movement. The conviction steadily grew that reform must come from below, that the Government would only act under the stimulus of outside pressure and unceasing agitation.

In the first place, Alexander's reforms appeared more imposing on paper than when put to the test of actual practice. The peasantry discovered that emancipation meant new burdens for old, and the improvement in their legal status effected little change in their economic situation, and no change at all in their moral principles. Russian thinkers had confidently predicted that the abolition of servitude would forthwith create a freer atmosphere and a vigorous and enterprising peasantry, forgetting that centuries of oppression cannot be wiped out by a single and belated act of justice. The judicial and administrative reforms admittedly laid the foundations of a better system of government, but here again the benefits so eagerly anticipated were deferred; for the success of an institution depends primarily upon the men who work it, and Russia lacked trained jurists and competent administrators. On psychological grounds also, it is possible to explain why public opinion veered completely round from a state bordering on exaltation to a state of the most profound depression. For a generation the normal development of the Russian people had been arrested by the iron will of Nicholas I.; the moment his hand was withdrawn from the helm of the State, the nation by an irresistible effort burst asunder the bonds which had cramped its energies and fettered its activities. In the first flush of unbounded optimism the wildest hopes of a new heaven and a new earth were entertained, and the regeneration of the whole Russian Empire seemed at hand. But when the reforms of Alexander II. failed to accomplish the striking results so eagerly looked for, there followed a complete revulsion of feeling. The pendulum swung from one extreme to the other, and despair—no less irrational than the extravagant enthusiasm which preceded it—became the prevailing sentiment of Russian society. The ultimate reason, however, for the growth of a reactionary spirit in the later years of Alexander's reign is to be found in the character of the Emperor himself. He had no instinctive faith in the virtues of Liberal institutions, and his reforms were conceived not in the spirit of an idealist, but from the conviction that where change was inevitable

1864

*Its causes.**Character  
of Alex-  
ander II.*

1865 — it ought to proceed from above rather than from below. His consciousness of great responsibilities made him cautious and distrustful of his own judgment. He had not the large creative mind and breadth of statesmanship necessary for the solution of the problems which he was called upon to handle. He was forced to rely upon his councillors, and here his vacillation and want of resolution laid him open to conflicting influences. He was surrounded by advisers trained in the school of Nicholas, and impregnated with his reactionary doctrines. Though compelled for a time to refrain from open manifestation of their opinions, these men gradually acquired a predominant hold over the Emperor's mind. After 1864 the reforming zeal of Alexander rapidly cooled, partly on account of the Polish insurrection, and partly from the fear that further concessions would weaken the Autocracy. He had attempted to satisfy the nation with half-measures, the serfs with an emancipation only semi-complete, the nobles with the grant of provincial liberties. Yet it was abundantly clear that no real progress could be achieved while the Imperial administration was divorced from all popular control. The burden of Empire was too great for one man's shoulders, and responsible government alone could remedy the maladies with which Russian society was afflicted. The nobles had expected their own political emancipation to follow the legal emancipation of their serfs, as logically it should have done. They were entitled to a share in political power as the reward for the sacrifices they had been required to make. In 1865 the Moscow nobles petitioned the Emperor to establish representative institutions, in order, they said, that truth may "reach your throne without hindrance." But this demand for a Constitution was always strenuously resisted by the Emperor to the end of his days. Thus all classes of the community were disillusioned, and from their dissatisfaction with the existing state of affairs sprang the Nihilist movement.

*Nihilism.* The term 'Nihilist,' as applied to Russian revolutionists, was first introduced by Turgenev in his novel, *Fathers and Sons*.<sup>1</sup> Its principal character, Bazarov, was intended to

<sup>1</sup> Translated by C. Garnett.



portray a new type then coming into prominence among the younger generation of the 'sixties. He is represented as one "who does not bow down before any authority, who does not take any principle on faith, whatever reverence that principle may be enshrined in"; who refuses "to talk nonsense about art, parliamentarism, trial by jury . . . while, all the time, it is a question of getting bread to eat"; and who is convinced that there is no "single institution in our present mode of life, in family or in social life, which does not call for complete and unqualified destruction." Bazarov is often supposed to embody "the spirit of absolute negation and of barren criticism"; and, when he is told that it is necessary to build up as well as to pull down, he replies: "That's not our business now. . . . The ground wants clearing first." Turgenev's analysis, whatever its limitations, served to concentrate attention upon one fundamental feature of Nihilism as a philosophical system. This was its complete divorce from all regard for sentiment or tradition, the fetish of which clogged the wheels of progress and enslaved the mind of the human race. It is therefore the antithesis of Burke's philosophy, involving as it did an uncompromising breach with the past, and the reconstruction of society on a *tabula rasa*. The Nihilist cast away from him all that his contemporaries accepted on faith and treated as sacred, making scientific reasoning his starting-point, and discarding the worn-out truths of the 'Fathers.' Thus Nihilism revealed itself primarily as a force of destruction, but the programme sketched in Chernuishevsky's novel, *What is to be Done?*, showed that the movement had also a positive side.

In its first phase Nihilism was thus mainly a philosophy of negation, whose purpose was to break down the barriers erected by superstition and the worship of authority. In this respect it was a development of eighteenth-century philosophy, but with the important difference that it was based on science. The author of *Underground Russia*, known under the name of Stepniak, and himself a Nihilist, described it as "a struggle for the emancipation of intelligence from every kind of dependence. . . . The fundamental

(1) *The first phase of Nihilism: philosophical.*

1871-75 — principle of Nihilism, properly so called, was absolute individualism. It was the negation, in the name of individual liberty, of all the obligations imposed upon the individual by society, by family life and by religion . . . a reaction against the moral despotism that weighs upon the private and inner life of the individual." The love of the beautiful, Art itself, was renounced, since it was not inspired by pure reason. "A shoemaker is superior to Raphael," it was said, "because the former makes useful things, while the latter makes things that are of no use at all."<sup>1</sup> In one direction, at any rate, Nihilism bore practical fruit by achieving the emancipation of women and establishing their right of free access both to higher education and the professions.

(2) *The second phase: The propagandist movement.*

After a few years (1860-1870), Nihilism ceased to be a philosophical and literary movement, and developed into a revolutionary and militant movement. It entered upon this new phase about 1871. An attempt to assassinate the Emperor Alexander in 1866 threw him into the arms of the reactionaries, and the Government in an outburst of hysteria indulged in all the excesses of a 'White Terror.' Its severity sowed the seeds of revolution, yet the inspiration which gave the impulse to a revolutionary movement came from abroad. The passion for individual freedom was merged, as the result of foreign influences, into the greater passion for social and political freedom. The example of the Parisian Commune,<sup>2</sup> which had endeavoured to establish a social democracy, crystallized in definite form the vague aspirations of Russian educated thought. It inflamed the minds of those who pitied the wretched condition of the Russian peasant, burdened with taxes often in excess of the income of his land, and "exhausted," as they said, "by hunger, broken down by toil, the eternal slave of the privileged classes, working without pause, without hope of redemption." Another influence moulding Russian political thought was the 'Internationale,' a Socialist society, whose headquarters at Zurich attracted great numbers of men

<sup>1</sup> Stepniak, *Underground Russia* (Eng. trans. 1883), 4, 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Infra*, Chapter VIII.

and women from all parts of Russia. Ordered by the Imperial Government in 1873 to leave Zurich, they returned home to spread among their countrymen the new gospel of the emancipation of the proletariat. Out of the ferment of political ideas, two main currents of opinion emerged: Socialism and Anarchism. The Socialists were represented by Lavroff, whose programme was peaceful propaganda among the peasants—in short, the education of the masses. Like the disciples of Mazzini,<sup>1</sup> the Socialists were to go ‘among the people’ and share their life, but the ideas they were to impart to them were to be those of social and economic freedom, not of nationality. The Anarchists, on the other hand, followed the lead of Bakunin, ‘the genius of destruction,’ whose policy was to rouse the peasantry to an immediate revolution. At first the more moderate counsels of the Socialist party prevailed, and the young men and women of Russia prepared to devote their lives to the people from whom they were sprung. This movement for the peaceful dissemination of Socialist ideas covered chiefly the years 1872–75, but from the outset it was carried on with the greatest difficulty. In Petrograd Prince Kropotkin lectured secretly among the workmen of the suburbs, while others settled in villages or worked in factories. It was impossible, however, to keep the propaganda secret from the police, and the agitators were arrested in great numbers and brought to trial. Even when they were acquitted, they were interned in a northern province, and from 1863 to 1874—on one pretext or another—nearly 150,000 persons were deported to Siberia.

This collapse of the propagandist movement wrought great depression in the ranks of the revolutionists. A whole generation of eager enthusiasts had been ‘mown down,’ and the scanty successes achieved seemed paltry by the side of the immense sacrifices they had entailed. In these circumstances Nihilism entered upon its third and best-known stage, that of political terrorism. “The propagandist movement,” it was said, “was a sublime test of the power of Words. By a natural reaction the opposite course

(3) *The third phase: Revolutionary Nihilism.*

<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, p. 167.



1876-78 — was now to be tried, that of Acts. . . . The cry of 'Let us act' became as general as that of 'among the people' had been a few years before."<sup>1</sup> Force was to be met by force, and peaceful agitation, which seemed powerless to effect an improvement, was succeeded by armed resistance. The next three years (1876-1878) witnessed a number of 'demonstrations,' or street insurrections. But repeated failure drove home the lesson that revolutions like those in Paris were impossible in Russia, where nine-tenths of the population were dispersed over the country-side. The control of the army enabled the Government to suppress with ease all popular outbreaks, and after 1878 their futility was recognized even by the revolutionary party itself. Meanwhile, the relentless severity of the administration was deepening in the hearts of the revolutionists their feelings of bitter hatred and personal resentment. Political cases were tried in special courts, and the harshest sentences were inflicted for insignificant offences. Students were excluded from the Universities, and thereby debarred from the higher public appointments. The District Councils (*Zemstvos*) and the law courts were placed under more stringent control. The works of Mill, Spencer, and Lecky were not allowed to enter Russia, and cases affecting the press were tried without a jury. All the abuses of the old regime reappeared, and bribery and corruption were once more rife. In a word, the Government—now completely out of touch with public opinion—found itself in open conflict with the Russian *Intelligence*. The ruling caste became more and more reactionary, the educated classes more and more revolutionary, and there were no moderating influences in the country to hold the balance between the extremists on both sides. As the result of repression, the Nihilist ceased to be a propagandist, and became 'the type of individual force.' Abandoning pacific methods, Nihilism developed into a vast secret conspiracy which no longer leaned upon popular support, but employed the deadly weapon of assassination. Nihilists justified the use of a weapon so repugnant to Western ideas, on the ground that "an

<sup>1</sup> Stepniak, *op. cit.* 33.

insurrection in the European manner was absolutely impossible," and that everything was permitted against a system of government based on "organized injustice," and "entrenched behind a forest of bayonets."<sup>1</sup> Deeds of violence were at first spasmodic and directed chiefly against spies. The impulse to an organized system of Terrorism came from the act of a woman, Vera Zassulic, who fired a revolver shot at General Trepoff (February 1878), in order to avenge a political prisoner flogged in defiance of the law. She was acquitted by the jury; and, when the police attempted to rearrest her, she was rescued by the crowd and escaped over the frontier. This event created a profound sensation throughout Europe and brought on a crisis which lasted three years, culminating finally in the assassination of the Emperor. Alexander appealed to public opinion, but the *Zemstvos* replied that "the struggle with destructive ideas would be possible only if the public possessed its own weapons—freedom of speech and of the press, of opinion and of instruction." This was the only real remedy, but neither Alexander II. nor his immediate successor was willing to share his power with the nation.

The control of the revolutionary movement was now in the hands of a society known as 'Land and Liberty,' which had branches in different parts of Russia. But the old differences which had divided Russian revolutionists still survived; one section—the 'Black Partition'—consisted of social democrats whose methods were pacific; while the other section—the 'Will of the People'—relied upon force. A few months after the acquittal of Zassulic, the head of the secret police (the Third Section) was 'put to death' in broad daylight in the streets of Petrograd, his assailant escaping arrest. Four attempts were made upon the life of Alexander II. After the first attempt Russia was divided into six military governments, each under the control of a governor-general armed with absolute powers of life or death. Yet the only result of the proclamation of martial law was to stimulate the revolutionists to renewed activity. Though the Nihilists were but few in number,

<sup>1</sup> Stepniak, *op. cit.* 41, 271.

1878-81

*The  
Terrorism.*

*Assassina-  
tion of  
Alexander  
II. (1881).*

1881

their energy, fearlessness, and devotion to their cause, made them extremely formidable. The real secret of their success, however, lay in the complete isolation of the Russian Government, which had alienated society by withholding from it the most elementary political rights—liberty of speech and liberty of the press, national representation, and, above all, freedom from arbitrary arrest and deportation. Public opinion, while it could not endorse acts of violence, sympathized with the objects of the revolutionary programme, and funds for Nihilist purposes were secretly supported by all classes. After the third attempt, an explosion in the Winter Palace, new tactics were adopted. Coercion having failed to stamp out Nihilism, Alexander attempted to disarm it by a policy of conciliation. Loris-Melikoff was invested with the powers of a dictator, and his first measures skilfully created the illusion that serious reforms were about to be taken in hand. This pacified the public mind, and even the revolutionists momentarily suspended their campaign. The illusion did not last long. It was soon discovered that Loris-Melikoff had no intention of effecting really radical changes in the system of government. Nevertheless, he managed to obtain the Emperor's assent to the institution of a General Commission, a semi-representative body, containing a number of delegates elected by the *Zemstvos* and the chief towns. Whether this very moderate concession would have met with approval is doubtful, for the functions of the new Commission were to be purely consultative. But the scheme never received a trial, for on the very day Alexander yielded his consent he was killed by a bomb (1881). The Revolutionary party at once published a manifesto offering to refrain from further acts of violence on condition of (1) a national assembly elected on the basis of manhood suffrage, and (2) freedom of the press, freedom of speech, and the right of public meeting: "the only means," it declared, "by which Russia can enter upon the path of peaceful and regular development."<sup>1</sup>

The reign of Alexander's successor, as the French his-

<sup>1</sup> The manifesto is printed in the Appendix to Stepniak, pp. 287-94.



torian, Rambaud, pointed out at the time, opened under gloomy auspices, for it began with the first public execution of a woman for over half a century. From the outset Alexander III. pursued a policy of avowed reaction. He revived the arbitrary traditions of Nicholas I., whom in many respects he closely resembled. The keynote of his policy was sounded in an imperial manifesto issued upon his accession to the throne. "The Voice of God," it announced, "orders us to stand firm at the helm of government . . . with faith in the strength and truth of the autocratic power, which we are called to strengthen and preserve, for the good of the people, from every kind of encroachment." Melikoff's project of a General Commission was still-born; and the Government proceeded on every side to conduct a relentless campaign against Russian educated thought. Behind the throne now ranged the sinister figure of the Procurator of the Holy Synod, Pobêdonostev, the evil genius of Russia. Pobêdonostev exercised great influence over the minds of Alexander III. and Nicholas II., whose education had been entrusted to his hands. In the confession of political faith which he has left on record, he condemned all Western institutions root and branch, and even attempted to give a philosophical basis to reaction. He pronounced Constitutional Government to be "the great political lie which dominates our age," and defined Parliament as merely "an institution serving for the satisfaction of the personal ambition, vanity, and self-interest of its members." It was, indeed, "one of the greatest illustrations of human delusion," while Democracy was "the most complicated and the most burdensome system of government recorded in the history of humanity."<sup>1</sup> No one who has had experience of the working of Western institutions will be tempted to pronounce them ideal; but, however much they may fall short of perfection, they at any rate ensure the sanctity of law and the ordered liberty that springs from law. It is by its fruits that an institution should be judged, and the fruits of Pobêdonostev's system were not likely to recommend themselves to Russian public opinion. The

1881-94  
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*Alexander*  
*III.*  
(1881-  
1894).

<sup>1</sup> Pobêdonostev, *Reflections* (Eng. trans. 1898), 34, 35, 43, 45.

1886-89 — press was subjected to the most rigorous treatment, many newspapers being suppressed outright or indirectly compelled to suspend publication.<sup>1</sup> The Universities, which were equally obnoxious to the authorities, were not only denied the right to administer independently their own internal affairs, but restrictions were also placed on the admission of students and their right of association. This control over education extended to all the primary and secondary schools, and many schoolmasters were expelled from their positions. Most disastrous of all was the treatment meted out to the law courts and the *Zemstvos*, for this struck at the very root of Alexander II.'s most vital reforms.

*The Land  
Captains.*

We endeavoured to show above how the Emancipation of the Serfs—the greatest landmark in the history of Russia during the nineteenth century—was more beneficial on its legal side than on its economic. We saw, for example, how the peasants were burdened with such heavy taxation that “for the majority of the Russian peasantry the primary object in life is to earn enough to pay the taxes.”<sup>2</sup> But with all its drawbacks the Edict of Emancipation achieved one invaluable result—it liberated the peasant from the rule of the squirearchy; it shattered the feudal authority of the local land-owners. An attempt was now made to reverse the whole course of historical development from slavery to freedom; to re-establish a kind of ‘bastard feudalism’; to degrade the peasant once more to a condition of legal servitude. This was done by placing the rural population under a system of police discipline, administered by the landed proprietors over the labourers on their estates and the peasant owners in their neighbourhood. The first step in this direction was taken in 1886, when a breach of contract by a hired labourer was made a criminal offence. Three years later a fundamental change was made in the law courts, the class of elected magistrates (Justices of the Peace) being replaced by nominated officials known as

<sup>1</sup> E.g. by not being allowed to publish advertisements or to be sold in the streets.

<sup>2</sup> P. Vinogradoff in *Lectures on the History of the Nineteenth Century* (1902), 259.

Land Captains. The new institution was marked by the grossest defects. The Justices of the Peace had been elected by the *Zemstvo*, and they had shown themselves competent for their work. The Land Captains were chosen by the Governor of the province from among the local squires, and so served as the instruments of the central power. In addition they were vested both with judicial and administrative functions, in defiance of the wholesome principle that the administrator should not be the judge of his own actions. As judges, indeed, the new officials, who usually had no legal training and were ignorant even of legal processes, proved hopelessly inferior to the Justices of the Peace; and the 'reign of law,' inaugurated by Alexander's reforms, came to an abrupt end. As administrative officials the Land Captains possessed the most arbitrary powers. They practically wielded a dictatorship, and as 'nurses to the peasantry' they exercised the widest control over everything which concerned the peasants—the disposal of property, the election of communal officers, sanitary measures, relief of the poor. Their almost unlimited authority was backed by the right to imprison without trial. "We have no more judges," said a peasant, "we have commanding officers." "There is no indignity," observed a Russian magistrate, "which in the beginning of the twentieth century may not be inflicted on a Russian peasant." No class of officials was more hated than the Land Captains, because of the manner in which they abused their authority. "In what spirit justice and police are wielded by the Land Captains," wrote Professor Vinogradoff, "may be gathered from a few facts. During the terrible famine of 1892 the Land Captains of some districts of the province of Nijniy opposed systematically the policy of relief and restricted the delivery of bread although the population was literally starving, because they wanted to keep the people at low wages."<sup>1</sup>

In another direction also we can trace an immense *The* set-back to the reform movement in Russia from 1881 to *Zemstvos.* 1904. Few institutions of Russian society during the

<sup>1</sup> Vinogradoff, *op. cit.* 265.



1881-  
1904  
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second half of the nineteenth century merit more careful attention than the *Zemstvos*, or elected local government boards, which not only carried on a great work of social reconstruction, but gave to Russians an invaluable training in the art of self-government. Even the Revolutionary party, which sought more expeditious methods of achieving its ends, bore ungrudging testimony to their work. "Nobody can deny," wrote Stepniak, "that they have shown a praiseworthy activity," and have "laboured with all zeal and devotion for the good of the people, and not for the benefit of the class to which the majority of them belonged. . . . The measures they adopted proved them to be possessed of sound sense and practical views. This they showed by taking so much to heart, and at once, the question which is above all others and on which everything else depends—popular instruction, whereby alone the masses can be rendered capable of judging and acting for themselves."<sup>1</sup> There were practically no primary schools in Russia until the *Zemstvos* took the matter in hand, and they also effected great improvements in the medical and sanitary arrangements. In this work the *Zemstvo* of the province of Moscow enjoyed an honourable pre-eminence, and its creditable record illustrates the nature of the activities upon which the *Zemstvos* in general were engaged. It "brought the school within two miles of every inhabitant of the province of Moscow, and the hospital within five. Particularly admirable were the equipping of small medical outposts and the beginnings of adequate provision for the insane. Clover was supplied to the peasants, and there was a notable improvement in the cattle. Veterinary doctors were established, and imported cattle were inspected. Factories were compelled to drain their premises. The *Zemstvo* engaged to find water for villages. One thousand miles of road were constructed. Great pains were taken to create village libraries. In all these departments, each of which was committed to one man, the *Zemstvo* worked without pay, and was always ready to raise the rating rather than defer improvements. . . . The Moscow *Zemstvo* changed

<sup>1</sup> S. Stepniak, *Russia under the Tsars* (1885), ii. 169.

the face of the province." <sup>1</sup> But the admirable work accomplished by the *Zemstvos*, so far from disarming the suspicions of the Government, served only to intensify the hostility of the central bureaucracy. Admission to the *Zemstvos* was carefully regulated with a view to excluding the more progressive elements in the local communities, and in 1900 the *Zemstvos* were forbidden to raise their annual budget by more than three per cent.—an arbitrary limit expressly designed to curtail the scope of their beneficial activities. Moreover, as a Russian Liberal has pointed out, "the intentions of the reactionary party are even more worth notice than its particular achievements. The real enemy is always the same—law, a law independent of caprice and protection, proudly holding up its head in the face of the powers that be, appealing to the sense of dignity in man, and proclaiming the equality of citizens. . . . A Government which has created the Land Captains, and deprived millions of its Jewish subjects of the most common rights of citizens, even of the right of educating their children, such a Government is not a fitting patron of law and justice. What it enforces is obedience to order, not to law, and its contempt of law is exemplified in every way." <sup>2</sup>

1881-  
1904  
—

Throughout the reign of Alexander III. (1881-1894) this reactionary system of government held its ground successfully. Completely isolated from his subjects, refusing personal contact even with his ministers, the Tsar shut himself up in his retreat, "surrounded by sentries, shadowed by secret police," enduring for thirteen years "the terrible strain of prolonged warfare against unseen and desperate foes." <sup>3</sup> Nor did the accession of Nicholas II. effect any change in the political situation. He created intense disappointment among the educated classes by characterizing as "senseless dreams" the ardent desire of the nation to be admitted to a share in legislation. "Devoting all my efforts to the prosperity of the nation," he announced, "I will preserve the principles of Autocracy as firmly and

Nicholas  
II. (1894-  
1917).

<sup>1</sup> B. Pares, chapter on "Russia" in *Camb. Mod. Hist.* xii. 327.

<sup>2</sup> Vinogradoff, *op. cit.* 266.

<sup>3</sup> J. H. Rose, *The Development of the European Nations* (ed. 1915), 302.



1894-  
1904  
—

unswervingly as my late father." None the less after the lapse of a decade occurred the first great breach in the Autocratic Power, namely, the institution of an Imperial Parliament. We have now to trace the course of events which produced so epoch-making a change in the Government of Russia.

*Decline of  
Nihilism.*

The Reform Movement in Russia, as we have seen, passed during the nineteenth century through several phases. Under the name of Nihilism, it began in the 'sixties as a philosophical protest against superstition and the reverence for authority; it then assumed a more practical bearing and sought to awaken the Russian peasant to the degradation of his economic position; finally it developed into a system of organized Terrorism. The assassination of Alexander II. marked the climax of the Nihilist movement; up to this point it had possessed the sympathy of the educated classes, which approved its aims, even if they could not sanction its methods. But the death of the 'Liberator' seems to have caused a certain revulsion of feeling, and the Terrorist movement imperceptibly lost its hold over most sections of the Russian community. The leading Terrorists were remorselessly tracked down and made to pay the death penalty; and all efforts to revive the Terrorist organization met with failure. It became evident to all that the Russian problem could not be solved by acts of Terrorism, that a small band of men and women, however heroic and determined, were powerless to overthrow a Government commanding practically unlimited resources. In 1892 Stepniak confessed that the revolutionists alone could not destroy the Autocracy; so uneven a struggle, he said, was merely an "exercise in the art of self-sacrifice." The Russian peasant, sunk in apathetic ignorance, and characterized by an almost superstitious reverence for the Tsardom, was profoundly distrustful of his would-be liberators and listened to their solicitations with stolid indifference, if not with open hostility. The revolutionists learnt what Napoleon had discovered three-quarters of a century earlier, that the Russian peasantry was not ripe for political propaganda. In short, the reform movement failed in the nineteenth



century because it had only leaders and no followers ; it had failed altogether to strike root among the masses. Hence, if Russia had continued in the agricultural stage, the Autocracy would have remained unassailable ; but just as the Industrial Revolution in England shifted the centre of political gravity in 1832 from the landed to the mercantile classes, so a parallel movement in Russia profoundly modified the existing political situation. The unprecedented growth of industry during the closing years of the nineteenth century showed that Russia had been drawn within the ever-expanding sphere of the capitalist system. This rapid development was brought about by three different factors working in combination. The emancipation of the serfs made available an abundant supply of cheap labour ; the creation of railways opened up means of communication, and increased the facilities of transport ; and the influx of capital from abroad furnished the necessary basis for large industrial undertakings. The result was stupendous ; an immense stimulus was given to the cotton and mineral industries, and the factory system grew swiftly. On the eve of the Revolution, in 1917, Russia contained over three million factory workers, without taking into account the minor industries ; and among the industrial nations of the world she was said to rank fifth. The period of transition is associated with the ministry of M. Witte (1892-1903), who encouraged the economic penetration of Russia by foreign capitalists as the only way of developing her natural resources.

1894-  
1904  
—

The advent of industrialism in Russia is an event which ranks in importance second only to the Emancipation of the Serfs. We are concerned here with its political significance alone, and the bare recapitulation of statistics would fail to bring home to us the potentialities latent in the great economic change which passed over Russia. One invariable result of the capitalist system is the emergence of an industrial proletariat, and the artisan is always more intelligent and less conservative in his instincts than the rural labourer. In the ancient world the transition from monarchy to republicanism was due to the growth of cities, for town life

*The  
Industrial  
Revolution*

1894-  
1904  
—

fosters self-reliance, initiative, and love of change. In the country State of the modern world, with its looser political cohesion, the factory system has done away with the isolation of the worker ; it has brought great masses of men together under one roof, and so made possible concerted action among them. At the same time it has given them a consciousness of economic power, for while the individual is at the mercy of his employer, a well-organized union can often dictate its own terms. Now everything conspired to awaken in the Russian workman that discontent with his economic position, which is the usual source of political enlightenment. He suffered from long hours, low wages, brutal foremen, and a system of fines shamefully exorbitant. The Moscow employers blocked the path of factory reform on the ground of what they called "the freedom of the people's labour," which meant in practice the freedom of the strong to exploit the weak. The general economic condition of the country, at a time of apparent prosperity, may be gauged from the fact that the Russian peasant paid, as compared with the German, two and a half times as much for cotton and sugar, four and a half times as much for iron, six times as much for coal.<sup>1</sup> The other side of the picture must equally be taken into consideration. The expansion of industry not only created an industrial proletariat but it also called into existence a class of wealthy manufacturers ; and the one was no less incompatible with the maintenance of an arbitrary and autocratic regime than the other. In a word, Russia had passed for the time being into the stage of capitalism ; she had fallen into line with Western industrialism, and her methods of government, however suitable for a peasant empire, thus became a hopeless anachronism.

*The Social  
Democrats.*

The new economic situation was reflected in the transformation of political parties. The chief revolutionary party was known by the name of Social Democrats, and its programme marked in many ways a distinct advance upon that of its predecessors. In the first place, it recognized that the centre of political gravity was shifting permanently

<sup>1</sup> Before the Revolution of 1917 : Pares, *op. cit.* xii. 325.

Love me  
like  
love  
you.

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from the landed to the mercantile interests, in other words, that the field for revolutionary propaganda was to be found in factories and workshops, and not in villages. The older schools of thought, revolutionists and conservatives alike, had clung to the hope that it would be possible for Russia to escape from capitalism and the fruit it bears—a dominating *bourgeoisie*. Imbued with the socialistic principles of Karl Marx, the new school no longer set its face against the current, but openly proclaimed that “the worse things are now, the more complete will be the crash.” However much sentimentalists might affect regret at the passing away of the old order, the view was now widely held that Russia was not immune from the ordinary laws of evolution. In the second place it was thought that dreams of social reconstruction were fantastical until the ground had been cleared by a political revolution. The earlier revolutionaries believed that social and political changes should take place at one and the same moment, that the mere institution of parliamentary Government would not in itself improve the condition of the people. On the contrary, it would substitute for a worn-out inefficient bureaucracy an energetic and grasping *bourgeoisie*, which would grind the faces of the poor. This assumption, while containing an important element of truth, appeared to overlook two considerations. It ignored the fact that the propaganda of socialist ideas, and indeed agitation on behalf of any progressive movement, were much more difficult in a despotic country. Whatever their drawbacks, parliamentary institutions afford a guarantee of individual liberty to an extent only possible under a constitutional Government. Moreover the proletariat was bound sooner or later to become politically self-conscious, and to wrest political power out of the hands of the *bourgeoisie*. Once Labour was established in a strong political position, it could then employ the resources of the State to bring about the social revolution. The State would take over the instruments of production—land, factories, and mines—and so not only ensure proper social conditions for the worker, but also enable him to obtain a more equitable share of the produce of his labour. The Social Democrats

1894-  
1904  
—

gradual  
process  
of  
Russian  
revolution



1904

— abandoned as hopeless the dream of an abrupt transition from Autocracy to Socialism, and were content to adopt more patient tactics; a constitutional regime would serve as a convenient half-way house. From these various considerations the conclusion was drawn that the revolutionists should concentrate their efforts upon the proletariat, relying upon peaceful propaganda and the methods of industrial warfare, rather than upon Terrorism. A new weapon was brought into play, and strikes, which were a familiar feature in England as far back as the fourteenth century, now became the instrument by which the Russian workman sought to redress his grievances. These grievances were mainly economic, but the Social Democrats, who generally assumed the lead in any industrial dispute, usually contrived to introduce a political element. In order to combat this danger, the Government had recourse to an extraordinary device. Through secret agents the police actively encouraged the formation of Trade-Unions among the working-classes, supplying them with funds, and even organizing strikes for the purpose of distracting their attention from purely political questions. At Moscow this remarkable experiment was conducted by Zubátoff, the Chief of Detectives, but the employers complained to the Government that the police were fomenting discord in their factories, while the workmen discovered that the secret agents were utilizing the opportunity to detect and remove the 'ill-intentioned.' The ultimate result was to strengthen the Social Democrats, and to deepen the political significance of the new Labour movement.

*Effects of  
the Japan-  
ese War  
(1904).*

✓ The turning-point in the history of Russia came with the Japanese War (1904). The war was unpopular with the nation, and the incapacity with which it was carried on completed the disillusion of the Russian people, and opened their eyes to the gross defects of the bureaucratic regime. The Government was utterly discredited, and its weakness in the face of overwhelming public criticism speedily became transparent. Plehve, the Minister of the Interior, was assassinated in July 1904. His administration had been most reactionary: the year before his death, no less than

4867 persons are said to have been imprisoned or exiled without any regular trial.<sup>1</sup> Plehve was succeeded by Prince Mirsky, a more enlightened and humane statesman, who invited the reformers to submit their grievances. They hastened to avail themselves of so unique an opportunity. The 'Eleven Points,' drawn up by the representatives of the *Zemstvos* meeting in conference at Petrograd (November 1904), received the enthusiastic support of the professional classes. They demanded:

1904-5

"(1) Inviolability of person and domicile, so that no one should be troubled by the police without a warrant from an independent magistrate, and no one punished without a regular trial.

"(2) Freedom of conscience, of speech, and of the press, together with the right of holding public meetings and forming associations.

"(3) Greater freedom and increased activity of the local Government, rural and municipal.

"(4) An Assembly of freely elected representatives, who should participate in legislation and control the administration in all its branches.

"(5) The immediate convocation of a Constituent Assembly to prepare a Constitution on those lines."<sup>2</sup>

In addition they sought the abolition of the so-called 'temporary' ordinances, which in reality were more permanent than the laws which they affected to interpret, an amnesty for political prisoners, and freedom of public instruction. These demands were backed up by a series of banquets and demonstrations. Public excitement was growing, and the atmosphere seemed charged with electricity. A spark only was needed to produce a conflagration; this was supplied on January 22, 1905—a day marked in the Russian calendar as Red Sunday.

Hitherto the Reform Movement had been confined mainly to the educated classes, but now it was joined by the industrial proletariat. Father Gapón, a young priest, had organized in Petrograd a trade-union of factory workers, corresponding to that initiated by Zubátoff at

'Red Sunday'  
(January 22, 1905)

<sup>1</sup> Wallace, *Russia*, 691.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 692.

1905  
—

Moscow, and enjoying in the same way police protection. On January 15, a strike was declared on account of the dismissal of two workmen, and the strikers demanded an eight hours' day, better wages, improved sanitary arrangements, and arbitration boards. The Social Democrats now intervened, and the movement, which originated in a purely industrial dispute, rapidly acquired a political complexion. Gapón, recognizing that his control over the workmen was rapidly weakening, and carried away, it is said, by the prevailing excitement, fell in with the programme of the revolutionaries and attempted to recover his waning influence by appealing in person to the Emperor. On Sunday, January 22, a great procession of strikers, with their wives and children, was organized for the purpose of presenting a petition at the Winter Palace: this petition voiced the political as well as the industrial grievances of the Russian people. The demonstration was peaceful, but the troops fired upon the dense crowds which filled the suburbs. Gapón himself escaped unhurt, and his subsequent career is shrouded in some mystery.<sup>1</sup> But though the demonstration had failed to achieve its immediate purpose, public feeling in Russia was stirred to its depths. It was, moreover, a tangible sign of the political awakening of the working-classes, whose entrance into the Reform Movement gave it a broad democratic basis and enlarged its prospects of success. The next few weeks witnessed an epidemic of strikes in various parts of Russia, and innumerable assassinations, culminating in the murder of the hated Grand Duke Sergius, the Emperor's uncle. Disorder was rampant throughout the Empire, and to calm the public agitation the Emperor yielded to the demand for a National Assembly. On March 3, 1905, he announced his intention "to convene the worthiest persons possessing the confidence of the people, and elected by them to participate in the drafting and discussing of legislative proposals." At the same time memorials were invited as to the "improvement of the State organization and the amelioration of the national

<sup>1</sup> After his return to Russia, he was killed in 1906 by the revolutionaries who believed that he had become a Government spy.



welfare." As a result of this invitation the professional classes spontaneously organized unions comprising, among others, doctors, lawyers, teachers, engineers, clerks, and railway employees; these soon combined to form a huge Union of Unions. In all cases the programme was almost exactly identical; everywhere the cry was raised for genuine parliamentary institutions, and the elementary rights of citizenship. The current of progressive opinion was strengthened at this juncture by the news of the battle of Tsushima (May 27), when the Baltic fleet, which had been sent to the Far East to wrest from Japan the command of the Pacific, was destroyed by the great Japanese admiral, Togo. A deputation of the *Zemstvos* urged the Emperor not to delay the summons of national representatives: "At this terrible hour of the nation's trial, great is your responsibility before God and Russia."

After a lapse of two months there appeared on August 19 the 'Bulýghin Constitution,' as it was termed. It was received with widespread dissatisfaction. Instead of a parliamentary assembly with full legislative powers, it set up an Imperial Duma, which was to be merely consultative; it established a very narrow franchise which excluded factory operatives, country doctors, country schoolmasters, and other rural residents without property; and it also left the fundamental principles of Government unchanged, preserving intact the Autocratic Power and refusing to admit the principle of ministerial responsibility. The result was a general political strike. Under the inspiration of Khrustalév, a lawyer of great capacity, the workmen had formed a central organization, known as the Council of Labour Delegates, which rapidly assumed the authority and significance of a 'working men's Government.' It even extended its control over the unions of the professional classes, and at the end of October it proclaimed a general strike. Newspapers suspended publication; the supply of electric light was cut off; employers were bidden to close down their factories under penalty of wrecking; magistrates and doctors, among other professions, participated in the strike; while the railway men on their part were already

1905

*The  
General  
Strike  
(October  
1905).*

1905 out owing to the report that the representatives of their union had been arrested. The whole social system of the Empire came to a standstill, and no alternative remained to the Government but to give way. Completely cowed by this remarkable manifestation of the strength of the progressive movement, the Government issued the Manifesto of October 30.

*The  
October  
Manifesto  
(1905).*

The October Manifesto marked an epoch in the history of the Reform Movement. In unmistakable terms it promised the elementary rights of citizenship—inviolability of person, freedom of conscience, liberty of speech, and the right of association and public meetings. The Duma was endowed with legislative functions, and no law was to be valid without its approval. There was also promised an extension of the franchise—a promise carried into effect by the decree of December 24, which enfranchised the professional and working-classes. But these concessions cut at the very root of the power hitherto wielded by the police and local officials. They therefore made a determined effort to gain back the ground they had lost by the massacre of their opponents. A union of Reactionaries was formed under the name of "Genuine Russians"; and, though they had no following in the community at large, they proved dangerous from their close co-operation with the police, who organized a series of outbreaks with the aid of the "casual criminal class." This reactionary outburst "was vented chiefly on the peaceable Jewish population inhabiting the towns of the south-west and southern provinces. These poor people were pillaged and maltreated for several days to such an extent that in Western Europe their sufferings awakened a general feeling of commiseration, and the Russian word *pogrom* (devastation), by which the disorders were commonly designated, became for Englishmen a familiar term. . . . It is difficult to imagine how the Conservative or the Reactionary cause would be advanced by stirring up the hatred of the Russian lower classes against their Jewish fellow-citizens." <sup>1</sup> The most probable explana-

*Russian  
'pogroms.'*

<sup>1</sup> Wallace, *op. cit.* 716-717. See also I. Zangwill, *The Melting Pot* (ed. 1914), Appendix.

tion of these atrocities appears to be that "an anti-revolutionary demonstration was required for party purposes." The complicity of the authorities was notorious, the police having it in their power to check the *pogróms* without difficulty whenever they thought fit. 1906 —

The first Russian Parliament, known as "the Duma of the national indignation," met on May 10, 1906. It contained over four hundred members, of whom only seven were Reactionaries. The most important group was that of the Constitutional Democrats, or "Cadets," as they soon came to be called; they represented the Liberal Party and numbered 153. Their chief rivals were the Octobrists, or Conservatives, who supported the Constitution as defined by the October Manifesto. They were recruited mainly from the landowning classes, but in the first Duma they gained very few seats owing to the brutal severity with which the Government had recently repressed agrarian disorders. The Labour group comprised 107 members; the Autonomists, who represented the minor nationalities like the Poles and wanted self-government, accounted for 63 members; there was also a large number of Independents who appear to have had no definite programme. The existence of the first Duma only covered a period of seventy-two days, and it was occupied by a struggle with the Government over the question of ministerial responsibility. The balance of power in the Duma was held by the Cadets, who were generally able to command a majority owing to the support which they received from the other groups in the Chamber. They demanded parliamentary institutions on the English model, that is, a Cabinet responsible to the Duma, and not to the Emperor; they also claimed full authority over legislation and finance. Before the Duma met, its power had been greatly restricted by the Manifesto of March 5, and other enactments; for example, it could not alter the so-called 'Fundamental Laws'; the army, navy, and foreign policy remained the sole province of the Emperor; and even the budget was safeguarded from parliamentary interference. In a word, the guarantees of civil liberties and genuine constitutional rule, foreshadowed in the October

*The First Duma*  
(May 10-  
July 21,  
1906).



1906 — Manifesto, were rendered null and void. The struggle between the Duma and the Government lasted over two months, and eventually the Court seemed on the point of consenting to a Cadet Ministry. But this was strongly opposed by Stolýpin, and his appointment as Premier was followed by the dissolution of the Duma on July 21. Nearly half the members withdrew to Viborg in Finland, where they issued a Manifesto calling on the nation to refuse taxes, and not to furnish recruits for the army. Yet while the country disapproved of the Government's action, it had no means of offering organized resistance, and the protests of the Duma leaders were made without effect. The increased rigour of the new administration was shown in the unprecedented extension of capital punishment, which was now inflicted for ordinary robberies, and even for insults to officials. More than six hundred persons suffered the death penalty under this regulation, while in a single year as many as 35,000 persons were actually banished, without trial, for alleged complicity in agrarian disturbances.

*Conduct of  
a General  
Election.*

In the elections for the new Duma every conceivable pressure was brought to bear in favour of the Reactionaries and the Octobrists. "For the Cadets, political propaganda was made impossible. The Cadet party was refused legal recognition; officials were dismissed for belonging to it. . . . Powers were freely used to disfranchise various classes of voters. . . . Unsatisfactory candidates were struck off the rolls or exiled; Jews were told that if they voted they would be expelled. Lists of candidates were officially circulated for the Reactionaries and the Octobrists. Other parties were punished for naming their candidates. In towns voting papers were withheld by the police from a quarter or even a third of the voters; polling places were reduced in number; the days for polling were not announced or even deliberately announced wrongly; peasant farmers were called away to their communes, under threat of fines, on the days fixed for the polling of small landowners. A circular from the Synod instructed the priests to 'take an active part and guide their flocks,' threatening the refractory 'with the wrath of God'; priests were to become candi-

dates, wherever possible. In some towns the Reactionaries took away voting papers or even arrested their opponents.”<sup>1</sup> In spite of these tactics, the Opposition carried the great majority of seats. Most constituencies deliberately chose candidates who were known to be in disfavour with the Government. In the case of twenty-five provinces, nearly one-third of the elected representatives had been imprisoned, or exiled, or dismissed from the public service. Of the Duma as a whole more than a quarter had suffered ‘administrative punishment.’ The Social Democrats, who had stood aloof from the first general election, now obtained between fifty and sixty seats. 1907-12

The second Duma assembled on March 5, 1907. Its existence was stormy and short-lived. The crisis was reached when the Government suddenly demanded the exclusion of the Social Democrats on grounds of disloyalty to the throne. The Duma appointed a committee to investigate the charge, but the ministry had already resolved upon its course of action, and the Duma was dissolved on June 16. A new electoral law was now promulgated, although legally no modifications were valid without the Duma’s consent. A large number of seats were taken away from those parts of the Empire which had returned Opposition members; various sections of the community were disfranchised; and the whole electoral system was so manipulated as to place the issue of the elections in the power of the landowners. The result was reflected in the third Duma, which met on November 14, 1907; the Octobrists obtained 153 seats, while the Cadets were reduced to 54. The most important action of this Duma was to liberate the peasant from the control of the Commune by substituting individual ownership of peasant lands for communal ownership. In 1912, after completing the appointed period of five years, the third Duma was dissolved. In the general election which followed, the Centre, composed of Nationalists and Octobrists, suffered a severe defeat; and, owing to the activity of the clergy, who took a prominent part in the elections, the victory was won by the Right. This gave the

*The Second  
Duma  
(March 5-  
June 16,  
1907).*

*The Third  
Duma  
(1907-  
1912).*

<sup>1</sup> Pares, *op. cit.* xii. 370-371.



1912-17  
—  
*The Fourth  
Duma*  
(1912-  
1917).

fourth Duma a reactionary character, since the Right contained no less than 155 members, while the Octobrists had only 132 and the Cadets only 52. A change now manifested itself in the attitude of the Octobrists. Hitherto they had supported the Government, but from this time they threw themselves into opposition owing to the failure of the Government to carry out the October Manifesto of 1905. This Manifesto, as we have already seen, promised personal inviolability, freedom of conscience, liberty of speech, right of public meeting and association, as well as freedom of parliamentary elections and the cessation of government by 'exceptional' laws. The formation of a Progressive Bloc in 1916 was intended to strengthen the hands of those who were endeavouring to transplant to Russian soil the conceptions of democratic liberty which are the bed-rock of Western life.

*The Reform  
Movement  
ends in  
Revolution.*

We have sought to trace the history of the Reform Movement in Russia over a period of one hundred years. Its progress was watched with sympathy by all who believed that free parliamentary institutions would afford scope for the progressive elements in the Russian nation to assert themselves; and that the removal of the shameful disabilities<sup>1</sup> which refused to the Jewish people "the common rights of civilized man," and the restoration of their independence to Poland and Finland, would be for Russia not a source of weakness but a source of strength. A distinguished Russian scholar voiced the Liberal standpoint of the more enlightened of his countrymen when he wrote: "The sooner it gets to be recognized that the dignity and welfare of Russia crave freedom as well as authority, and that the only basis to unite both is law, the easier it will be to solve the problems set before a nation which has a great stake in the destinies of the world."<sup>2</sup> The blindness of the czarist regime to the imperious necessity of taking time by the forelock caused the Reform Movement to develop into a Revolution (1917) which destroyed not only the monarchy but the structure of Russian society itself.

<sup>1</sup> See L. Wolf, *The Legal Sufferings of the Jews in Russia* (with an Introduction by A. V. Dicey, 1912).

<sup>2</sup> Vinogradoff, *op. cit.* 276.



## CHAPTER IV

### RACIAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROBLEMS IN AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (1815-1867)

THE history of Austria-Hungary in the nineteenth century is more complicated and involved than that of any other country in Europe. There is no single thread running through its development, as in the case of Italy or Germany ; it is deficient alike in unity and coherence. This is due primarily to the fact that Austria was not a nation but a 'monarchical machine,' with as many racial problems as it contained nationalities. In one respect its history is admittedly unique. Other empires have been built up by the sword or by colonization ; the Austrian Empire in the main was the product of marriages. Its foundations were laid in the thirteenth century when Rudolf I., Count of Habsburg, was elected Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. He added to his countship Austria, Styria, Carinthia, and Carniola, while his successors acquired Hungary and Bohemia. Throughout its chequered career the House of Habsburg pursued with unwearied tenacity and astuteness a policy of self-aggrandizement, exploiting its possession of the imperial dignity for the expansion of its own hereditary dominions. Under its rule German national development was retarded for centuries, for the Habsburgs discouraged the solitary efforts made to consolidate the political unity of Germany. They endeavoured as much as possible to withdraw their German territory from the orbit of the Germanic system, thus adopting the very principle of separatism which had transformed Germany into a mere

1815-48  
—  
*Character  
of the  
Habsburg  
monarchy.*

1815-48 — congeries of feudal States. The opening of the nineteenth century found the Habsburg monarchy confronted with a dual problem. On the one hand, it strove to retain its ascendancy in German affairs—an ascendancy uncontested for five hundred years, but now challenged by the growing prestige of the military power of Prussia. On the other hand, it had to knit together as best it could an ill-assorted Empire, which threatened to crumble into ruin at any moment. "My realm," confessed Francis II. on one occasion, "is like a worm-eaten house; if one part is removed, one cannot tell how much will fall." We have already traced the struggle between Austria and Prussia for the hegemony of Germany.<sup>1</sup> We have now to deal with the internal development of the Austrian nationalities.

*Metternich's  
domestic  
policy.*

Metternich, the Austrian Chancellor, like the poet Hesiod more than two thousand years before, bewailed the fact that he had come into the world either too soon or too late. "Earlier, I should have enjoyed the age; later, I should have helped to reconstruct it; to-day I have to give my life to propping up the mouldering edifice."<sup>2</sup> Prevention was therefore, as he acknowledged, the keynote of the internal administration. "Govern and change nothing," was the beginning and the end of the Imperial programme. "We follow," said Metternich to an English statesman, "a system of prevention in order that we may not be compelled to follow one of repression. . . . We are firmly convinced that any concession a Government may be induced to make strikes at the basis of its existence. . . . Concessions properly so-called can only have to do with rights of sovereignty . . . they can only be made by a sovereign at the expense of the capital of his own existence."<sup>3</sup> The exigencies of the domestic situation thus forced Metternich to make Austria the great conservative barrier to all the progressive movements in Europe, to devote the whole resources of the monarchy to a life-long struggle with 'Jacobinism,'—the spirit of revolutionary unrest. He was shrewd enough to

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter II.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs*, iii. 395.

<sup>3</sup> Cited, A. F. Pollard, "The Germanic Federation" in *Camb. Mod. Hist.* x. 355 seq.

recognize that it was impossible in the long run to encourage Liberalism in Germany or elsewhere, while pursuing a policy of repression at home. This was what Alexander, the Emperor of Russia, attempted to do, with disastrous effects upon his Polish provinces.<sup>1</sup> The Austrian Chancellor followed his principles to their logical conclusion when he refused to contaminate himself with revolutionary heresy, and when abroad—as at home—he never deviated from the course which he had marked out for himself in order to preserve intact the established order alike in Austria and in Europe.

“Asia begins on the Landstrasse.”<sup>2</sup> This famous saying of Metternich epitomised the oriental passivity and inertness of the Austrian State. The principles of constitutional government had made little headway in the Habsburg monarchy. “I also have my Estates,” said Francis; “I have maintained their constitution, and do not worry them; but if they go too far I snap my fingers at them and send them home.” While the national pulse of Germany throbbed under the vitalising influence of the War of Liberation, in Austria the public repose was not disturbed, and life flowed on in the old channels. Nor was any effort made, in imitation of the policy of Prussia, to meet the demand for constitutional reform by an energetic display of administrative activity. The monarchy discouraged all initiative and enterprise on the part of its servants, and the cumbrous machinery of the State was practically at a standstill. Austria was afflicted with all the evils to which a bureaucracy is prone, whenever it is not maintained at a high-water mark of efficiency by the stimulus of vigorous and enlightened public criticism. The various governmental departments—the State Conference, the State Council, and the Presidents of the Court Offices—instead of working together, pursued independent courses. The Austrian ‘system’ of government, in fact, was nothing more or less than stagnation in every direction, and the most uncompromising resistance to changes of any kind. Neither industry nor commerce flourished. Education was at a low level; for though

1815-48

Immobility  
of the  
Austrian  
State.

<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, p. 239 seq.

<sup>2</sup> A suburb of Vienna.



1848 — elementary schools existed, the higher branches of knowledge languished. "He who serves me," said Francis, "must teach what I command"; and the police exercised a rigorous control over University teaching. No opportunity was afforded for any expression of opinion on public affairs. Metternich laid down the principle that "no Government can pursue a firm and undeviating course when it is daily exposed to the influence of such dissolvent conditions as the freedom of the press."

*Causes of  
the Revolution of  
1848.*

The fundamental weakness of Metternich's famous 'system' was that it only retarded, it could not avert, the day of reckoning. It secured a fictitious appearance of unity, not by the heroic remedy of removing the sources of dissatisfaction, but by imposing compulsory silence upon the discontented elements. The forces of revolution, though veiled from sight, continued in active operation underground, and their eruption in 1848 was marked by a volcanic intensity which was all the more formidable because they had been so long repressed. These forces were extremely complex, and it is necessary to distinguish carefully between the different factors which combined to bring about the Revolution of 1848.

(1) *Intellectual  
unrest.*

(1) In the first place the efforts of the Government to check the spread of Liberal ideas were only partially successful. "All around the frontier," wrote Karl Marx, "wherever the Austrian States touched upon a civilized country, a cordon of literary censors was established in connexion with the cordon of custom-house officials, preventing any foreign book<sup>1</sup> or newspaper from passing into Austria before its contents had been twice or three times thoroughly sifted, and found pure of even the slightest contamination of the malignant spirit of the age." It was impossible, however, to exclude all progressive literature, and its influence upon the educated classes was all the greater since it was forbidden fare. The Universities focussed the intellectual unrest, and gave a powerful impulse to the various elements of disaffection. While on the surface Austria appeared to embody

<sup>1</sup> Even the works of Hallam were excluded as being too liberal: Seignobos, *Contemporary Europe* (Eng. ed. 1901), ii. 405.

what Mazzini termed "the Chinese principle of immobility,"<sup>1</sup> 1815-48  
 another contemporary writer drew a different picture:  
 "There was a slow underground movement going on which  
 baffled all Metternich's efforts. The wealth and influence  
 of the manufacturing and trading middle class increased.  
 The introduction of machinery and steam-power in manu-  
 factures upset in Austria, as it had done everywhere else, the  
 old relations and vital conditions of whole classes of society;  
 it changed serfs into free men, small farmers into manu-  
 facturing operatives; it undermined the old feudal trades-  
 corporations, and destroyed the means of existence of many  
 of them. The new commercial and manufacturing popula-  
 tion came everywhere into collision with the old feudal  
 institutions. The middle classes, more and more induced by  
 their business to travel abroad, introduced some mythical  
 knowledge of the civilized countries situated beyond the  
 Imperial line of customs; the introduction of railways  
 finally accelerated both the industrial and intellectual move-  
 ment. There was, too, a dangerous part in the Austrian  
 State establishment, viz. the Hungarian feudal Constitution,  
 with its parliamentary proceedings, and its struggles of the  
 impoverished and oppositional mass of the nobility against  
 the Government and its allies, the magnates. Pressburg,  
 the seat of the [Hungarian] Diet, was at the very gates of  
 Vienna. All the elements contributed to create among the  
 middle classes of the towns a spirit, not exactly of opposi-  
 tion, for opposition was as yet impossible, but of discontent;  
 a general wish for reforms, more of an administrative than of  
 a constitutional nature. . . . The reform plans bore the  
 stamp of an innocuousness almost amounting to political  
 virginity. A Constitution and a free press for Austria were  
 things considered unattainable; administrative reforms,  
 extension of the rights of the Provincial Diets, admission of  
 foreign books and newspapers, and a less severe censorship  
 —the loyal and humble desires of these good Austrians did  
 hardly go any farther."<sup>2</sup>

(2) But the desire for political reform was not the only,

<sup>1</sup> J. Mazzini, *Italy, Austria and the Pope* (1845), 22.

<sup>2</sup> Marx, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, 36-38.



1846-48 nor scarcely the most important, factor in the situation. It is doubtless true that there can be no Revolution without a Renaissance, that an intellectual stimulus is needed to awaken men from the apathy and stupor of servile acquiescence. Yet it is equally true that there can be no Revolution without economic distress, for the great mass of men are conservative in their instincts and are rarely moved to revolt except by some kind of economic pressure. The driving force of the Austrian movement in 1848 was primarily agrarian discontent. The peasants aspired to release themselves from the yoke of feudal servitude, and their immense importance in the Revolution is shown by the fact that once their grievances were redressed the insurrection itself rapidly collapsed. The Government, absorbed in routine and wedded to a policy of inaction, failed to take any steps to remove their economic disabilities. It lost an admirable opportunity to improve the condition of the rural classes in 1846, when the Polish nobles in Galicia rose in rebellion against Austria. The revolt was suppressed with the aid of the peasants, who eagerly welcomed an occasion to wreak their fierce vengeance upon their hated masters. The peasants expected their services to be requited by the abolition of their feudal dues, and their disappointment was severe when the State adhered to its traditional policy of *laissez-faire*. The discontent of the rural population furnished the enemies of the Government with a formidable instrument which they were able to exploit to good advantage. This combination of political and economic factors was destined, while it lasted, to prove irresistible.

The fall of  
Metternich.

The overthrow of the Orleans dynasty in France gave the signal for the outbreak of an insurrection at Vienna. The University led the way with a petition which was presented to the Emperor by two professors on March 12. The next day a popular deputation voiced the demands of the people for a constitutional regime. The crowded streets were thronged with citizens, and a spark alone was needed to kindle the flames of revolution. Nor was this long delayed; the populace, as very commonly happens, came to blows with the troops, and amidst the intense excitement



aroused by the loss of life anarchy reigned supreme in the capital. Abandoned by the Imperial Court, whose interests he had served so faithfully, Metternich was compelled to surrender his office and seek refuge in exile. His faults as a statesman had been great, and the association of his name with a reactionary political system which delayed the constitutional development of Europe for a generation makes it even now difficult to form a balanced opinion of his merits. Yet one achievement will stand for ever to his credit. Throughout his long tenure of power he strove to preserve the peace of Europe, and he secured for a world drenched with the blood of the Napoleonic wars the repose it sorely needed. The fall of the old Chancellor was the first victory achieved by the Revolution. Other triumphs followed in rapid succession. The whole fabric of Austrian government collapsed, indeed, with surprising ease. An Imperial manifesto announced wide and far-reaching concessions. Not only did it contain the promise of a Constitution, but as a liberal instalment it forthwith established freedom of the press and a National Guard, and it also summoned a Combined Diet of all the provincial Estates of the Empire. A Committee of twenty-four citizens administered the affairs of Vienna, the instruments of its authority being the National Guard and the Academic Legion, composed of University students. Without waiting, however, for the joint meeting of the Estates, the Ministry issued the new Constitution on April 25. This had already been laid before an assembly of notables, and on a first examination its terms appeared sufficiently comprehensive. It proclaimed the indivisible unity of the Austrian State, which was to comprise all the dominions of the Habsburg Empire, exclusive of Transleithanian territories, namely, Hungary, Croatia and Transylvania. It converted an autocratic system of government into a constitutional monarchy, based upon the rights of the individual to civil and religious freedom. Without abolishing the provincial Estates, it created a General Parliament (*Reichstag*), composed of two Chambers, and it recognized the principle of ministerial responsibility. While it undoubtedly marked

 1848  
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*The new  
Constitu-  
tion.*

1848 — in many ways a notable advance, the new Constitution aroused widespread dissatisfaction. The democracy of Vienna would have nothing to do with "a nondescript aristocratic Constitution, and an electoral law based upon the old division of Estates"; and the attempt to dissolve one of the democratic organizations (the Central Political Committee), which was usurping the authority of the Executive, provoked a fresh insurrection on May 15. The Government bowed before the storm, and not only restored the Central Political Committee, but also modified the Constitution on democratic lines, establishing universal suffrage and substituting a single chamber for a bicameral parliament. The Imperial Court deeply resented the concessions wrung from it by popular pressure, and the Emperor, alarmed for his safety, fled from Vienna to Innsbruck, where he was soon followed by the aristocracy and middle classes. "Here the Counter-Revolutionary Party found an asylum, from whence, uncontrolled, unobserved, and safe, it might rally its scattered forces, repair and spread again all over the country the network of its plots. Communications were reopened with Radetzky, Jellacic, and with Windischgrätz . . . intrigues were set on foot with the Slavonic chiefs, and thus a real force at the disposal of the Counter-Revolutionary *camarilla* was formed, while the impotent ministers in Vienna were allowed to wear their short and feeble popularity out in continual bickerings with the revolutionary masses. . . . Thus the policy of leaving the movement of the capital to itself for a time—a policy which must have led to the omnipotence of the movement party in a centralized and homogeneous country like France—here in Austria," as Marx acutely observes, "in a heterogeneous political conglomerate, was one of the safest means of reorganizing the strength of the reactionists."<sup>1</sup>

Insurrec-  
tion of  
May 15.

Meeting of  
the General  
Diet.

A few days after the departure of the Emperor, the Ministry furnished one more display of its impotence by attempting to disband the Academic Legion—the very mainspring of the revolutionary movement. Its ignominious failure dissipated the final shreds of its authority, and

<sup>1</sup> Marx, *op. cit.* 76-77.

as a result the control of affairs passed into the hands of a new Committee of Public Safety. On July 22 was opened the General Diet ; as it was elected on the basis of universal suffrage, the Slav element predominated and the German democrats found themselves in the minority. The constitutional issues of the Revolution, grave enough in themselves to tax all the resources of Austrian statesmen, were now still further complicated by the most intricate national issues. We shall have occasion to show how the Hungarian movement suffered shipwreck owing to the internecine conflicts of the Magyars with the races in their midst.<sup>1</sup> The course of events in Austria revealed the same tendencies at work. In the parliamentary arena of the Austrian Reichstag the discords of rival nationalities disclosed the irreconcilable feud which divided the Germans and the Slavs. The forces of reaction found their best ally in the divisions which reigned in the nationalist camp.

1848  
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The German democrats had fallen under the spell of the national movement, which was seeking to build up a United Germany and to combine together all the *disjecta membra* of the German body under a single head. They desired to merge Austria in Germany, and demanded that Austrian representatives should have a seat in the Frankfort Assembly. In this enthusiasm, however, they stood almost alone. The German provinces of the Austrian State do not appear to have shared their ardour, while the Government at any rate was naturally reluctant to compromise the integrity of the Habsburg monarchy. But the chief opposition came from the Slav races of Austria. The Czechs of Bohemia had no desire to see Cisleithanian Austria incorporated in a German Empire, for this would have given the deathblow to all their national hopes. Bohemia had never forgotten that she was once an independent kingdom, and to this day indeed she still cherishes her proud traditions. She was jealous of German ascendancy, and on the ground of 'historic rights' strove to acquire administrative autonomy. While German writers contended that "Bohemia could only exist, henceforth, as a portion of Germany, although part of her in-

*Conflicting  
national  
aspirations.*

*Bohemia.*

<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, p. 144 seq.



1848

habitants might yet, for some centuries, continue to speak a non-German language," the Czechs, under the leadership of the great Bohemian historian, Palacky, resolutely refused to be merged in an all-embracing German State. Even before 1848 the dormant spirit of nationality was being awakened by the revival of the Czech language and the study of Slavonic antiquities. A new incentive to national self-assertion was now supplied by the aggressive provocation of the two dominant races of the Austrian Empire—the Germans and the Magyars. It bore tangible fruit in a Pan-Slav Congress held at Prague in June 1848 as the Slav rejoinder to the German Assembly at Frankfort. Whether the dream of a great Slavonic Confederation uniting all the scattered branches of the Slav race was seriously entertained is open to question. Yet the indiscretions of Slav enthusiasts afforded a handle to their adversaries, who discerned in Pan-Slavism the dread shadow of the Russian autocracy. These fears were apparently unfounded. Bohemia was content to remain an integral part of the Austrian monarchy, though it claimed an independent national existence, and stoutly resisted absorption in a purely Germanic body. Thus, on the one hand, the Germans wished either to 'merge' Austria proper in Germany, or in any case to maintain the ascendancy they had so long enjoyed over the subject races—the Czechs of Bohemia and the Slovenes of Styria, Carinthia and Carniola. The Transleithanian provinces of the Empire—Hungary, Croatia and Transylvania—they were willing to yield up to the Magyars. The Slavs, on the other hand, protested against this division of the spoils between the Germans and the Magyars. Instead of a centralized bureaucratic State, their programme was a confederation of national States, in which ample scope would be afforded for the full political development of all racial communities.

*Failure  
of the  
Bohemian  
movement.*

For the moment the Czechs appeared in a fair way of realizing their ambitions. The Imperial Court, true to its traditional policy of playing off one race against another, saw in the clash of national ideals the means of turning the provinces against the capital. Bohemia was encouraged in her resistance to German domination. With the approval

of Prince Windischgrätz, who was in command of the Austrian army, the Bohemian administration under Count Thun renounced the authority of the Austrian ministry, and established an independent Government. These proceedings, though condemned by the Vienna Cabinet, received the sanction of the Emperor. But the nationalist movement in Bohemia proved short-lived. It was wrecked by a premature outbreak of the democrats at Prague, who thought to follow the example set by Vienna and make themselves masters of the situation. The insurrection was speedily crushed by Windischgrätz, who bombarded the city and reduced the rebels to submission. The Reaction had gained its first victory over the Revolution, and it reaped a fruitful harvest. It raised the spirits and heightened the self-confidence of the army, for it taught the lesson that insurgent democracy, fighting in barricaded streets, was not always invincible. Thus it broke the spell which the revolutionary exploits of Paris, Berlin and Vienna had cast over the mind of Europe. At the same time it intensified the hostility of the rival nationalities. The Germans regarded the collapse of the Bohemian separatist movement in the light of a national triumph. The Slavs, rendered innocuous to the Austrian Government by their failure to establish a confederation, were now employed by it as a weapon against the democracy of Vienna. Their conviction that the success of the German national movement would permanently impair their own prospects of independence made them a pliant instrument in the hands of the very party to whom they owed their downfall. They may also have hoped to win from the gratitude of the Government what they had failed to wrest from its fears. If this was their calculation they were destined to be deeply disappointed; yet it explains what the enemies of the Slavs bitterly called their 'infamous conduct' in the Austrian Constituent Diet, which assembled at Vienna on July 22. We have already seen how the Slav deputies preponderated in the Diet, and they proceeded to make "a systematic war upon the German element," who formed the minority on the Left. The latter were admittedly "the chief supporters of revolutionary



1848 — progress," but in the Revolution of 1848 the forces of nationality everywhere carried greater weight than the forces of Liberalism, and where they came into collision Liberalism invariably succumbed. Torn by racial dissensions, the Assembly failed signally to utilize its unique opportunities, and the first constitutional experiment attempted in Austria was a complete failure. One reform alone emerged out of the protracted debates of the Diet, the only enduring result of the Revolution, amidst so much that was transitory. This was the emancipation of the peasants from feudal servitude. All parties in the Reichstag were agreed as to the need for the abolition of forced labour, but they were divided on the question of compensation. The Government insisted that the landowners should receive compensation for the loss of the services paid them by the peasants; and this was done in spite of the opposition raised by the democratic party.

*End of the  
Vienna  
Revolution.*

Meanwhile, the populace in the Austrian capital displayed ominous symptoms of unrest. The hopes which they had at first reposed in the Reichstag were speedily disillusioned by the alliance of the Slav majority with the party of reaction, and they were also disquieted at the prospect of a Counter-Revolution whose advent was now momentarily expected. After two dangerous riots the disaffection of the masses culminated with an Imperial decree (October 3), dissolving the Hungarian Diet and declaring war upon the Magyar nationalists. The Viennese democracy had taken up with enthusiasm the cause of the Magyars, whose movement showed the same democratic leanings as their own, and when Latour, the Minister of War, ordered the troops stationed in Vienna to march against the Hungarians, the people resisted their departure and broke out in open insurrection. Latour was murdered, and the Emperor was made to revoke the manifesto of October 3. This marked the turning-point in the Revolution. The Emperor, who had returned to Vienna at the wishes of the Reichstag, again fled from the capital, and set up his court at Olmütz, whence he published a manifesto denouncing the revolutionary disturbances, and appealing for support to the provinces. At the same time the Slav majority in the Reichstag transferred



itself to Brünn, leaving the German rump to sink into the condition of a mere local committee. The end of the Revolution was not long deferred. On October 11 Windischgrätz, who had won great prestige by his victory over the insurrection at Prague, announced his intention to march on Vienna. On October 16 his authority was confirmed by an Imperial edict, and a few days later the capital was invested on all sides by the Austrian army. In spite of the heroic resistance of the Viennese, organized by a Napoleonic veteran, Joseph Bem, the city was taken on October 31. The fall of Vienna could only have been averted by the intervention of the Magyars at an early stage in the struggle. But the Diet, hidebound by 'constitutional conventionalities,' was loath to summon the Hungarian army to its assistance. The Hungarian Government, anxious to conduct the Revolution on lines of strict legal propriety, awaited the formal authorization of the Reichstag before venturing to invade German territory. This perfunctory policy was a mistaken one, for revolutions are not made with rose-water. Events soon showed that the fate of the Magyar Revolution was bound up with that of the Viennese Revolution, for the overthrow of the latter at once set the forces of reaction free to concentrate all their strength upon the destruction of the former. At the last moment, indeed, an attempt was made to raise the siege of Vienna, but the Austrians had availed themselves of the delay to complete their preparations, and in an encounter at Schwechat they easily drove back the relieving forces.

 1848  
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Now that the army had become master of the situation, the position of affairs was radically changed. There was no longer any need to conciliate democratic opinion, and the administration was therefore placed in the hands of Prince Schwarzenberg—the brother-in-law of Windischgrätz—who was a reactionary, pure and simple. Devoid of scruples, and endowed with a strong, determined nature, he was inflexibly resolved to preserve the integrity of the Austrian monarchy. He fought successfully against the attempt of the Frankfort Assembly to absorb German Austria in Germany and against the efforts of the Magyars to emanci-

*The Bach system*

1849-51 — pate Hungary. The Constitution drafted by the Reichstag—which had been allowed for the time being to continue its labours at Kremsier—with its elaborate exposition of ‘fundamental rights’ (*Grundrechte*) and large concessions to federalist prejudices, was contemptuously thrown aside. The new Constitution, imposed on the Empire by Imperial authority (March 4, 1849), proclaimed in every line the indivisible unity of the monarchy, and welded once more into a centralized bureaucratic State all the heterogeneous dominions of the Austrian Crown. The position of the Government was enormously strengthened by the collapse of the Hungarian Revolution a few months later, and it became absolutely impregnable after the humiliation of Prussia at Olmütz<sup>1</sup> sealed the fate of the German national movement also. Victorious at length over the disruptive forces of Magyar and German nationalism, one thing alone was needed as the coping-stone of the edifice of Reaction. This was supplied on December 31, 1851, by the issue of an Imperial rescript annulling the Constitution of March 4. Henceforth, even the pretence of constitutionalism was openly set aside, and the monarchy pursued the course of naked absolutism. The period of reaction is known by the name of ‘Bach’s system,’ although its leading characteristics were imprinted on it by Schwarzenberg. None the less, it was not an era of blind reaction. Constitutional reform in the body politic was dead; but administrative and economic reforms were vigorously taken in hand. One valuable treasure was rescued from the shipwreck of all the hopes with which the movement of 1848 had opened. The abolition of serfdom remained the sole practical outcome of the Revolution, and no attempt was made to restore the old feudal institutions, compulsory labour and seigniorial justice. This was the course of the Revolution in Austria; we have now to trace the course of the corresponding movement in Hungary.

In Austria-Hungary, as in Italy and Germany, the Revolution of 1848 embraced two distinct movements,

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 66.

the one constitutional, the other national. The former sought to achieve the emancipation of individuals, the latter the emancipation of nationalities. In all three countries the two movements were in close alliance with each other. In Italy, for example, the combination of the forces of Liberalism with those of Nationalism was imperatively demanded by the nature of the political situation; the pettiest Italian tyrant was omnipotent against his subjects so long as he was backed by the resources of the Austrian Empire.<sup>1</sup> This combination was equally necessary, not in Vienna—where the revolution was exclusively Liberal, since the Germans, as the dominant race, had no national grievances—but in Hungary. The feudal privileges of the Hungarian nobles, who alone were represented in the Diet and were also exempt from taxation, were a great obstacle to constitutional progress. The nobles, however, were hardly likely to surrender their privileges at the bidding of Liberal reformers—unless their resistance was overborne by an outburst of national enthusiasm, such as led the members of the French National Assembly on August 4, 1789, to compete with one another in a generous rivalry of self-sacrifice and voluntary renunciation. Hence Liberalism in Hungary was driven into an alliance with Magyar Nationalism, as the only force which could enable it to triumph over opposition. But this alliance of Liberalism and Nationalism, so fruitful in Italy, was sterile, and even worse than sterile, in Hungary. The attempt of the Magyars to exclude other races in Hungary from the privileged position which they claimed for themselves, brought about the ruin not only of their own national movement, but of the constitutional movement, whose fortunes were bound up with it. Another important difference also emerges when we contrast the Hungarian revolution of 1848 with the Italian or the German revolution. In Italy and Germany the national movement meant integration; in Austria-Hungary it spelt disintegration. The bare enumeration of the peoples comprised within the Habsburg monarchy—Germans, Magyars, Czechs, Slovaks,

1848

*Comparison  
of the  
Hungarian  
Revolution  
with the  
German  
and  
Italian.*

<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, p. 166.



1791 — Roumanians, Ruthenes, Croats and Serbs—is impressive in its demonstration of racial diversities. Of these eight nationalities, we are told that each possessed “its own distinct culture and historic traditions, and, with the exception of the Croats and Serbs, each speaks a different language.”<sup>1</sup> Thus the Racial Question overshadowed every other problem in the Dual Monarchy, and it was recognized that any solution on strictly national lines would lead to the disruption of the Austrian Empire. We can best illustrate the complex issues involved in the Racial Question by tracing the fortunes of the Hungarian revolution.

*Violation  
of Hun-  
garian  
privileges.*

For centuries Hungary had cherished the traditions of self-government and constitutional rights. Joseph II., the greatest of the Enlightened Despots, came into conflict with these traditions on the eve of the French Revolution, when he attempted to centralize his heterogeneous dominions and weld them into a single compact State. In violation of the Hungarian Constitution he refrained from summoning the Diet; enjoined the use of German as the official language; did away with the County Assemblies; and carved out the country into ten circles or provinces under German administrators. These drastic measures were revoked at the end of his reign, but the storm of opposition which they aroused bore permanent fruit in the revival of national feeling. The Diet of 1791 forced Leopold II., the successor of Joseph, to recognize the freedom and independence of the Hungarian nation. Henceforth the Diet was to meet every three years, and without its assent no taxes could be levied; it was also promised that Hungary should be governed “according to its own laws and customs, and not after the manner of other provinces.” The concessions extorted from the Habsburgs in 1791 embodied in principle almost all the rights contained in the Magyar programme for three-quarters of a century to come. But in Hungary, as in England, the outbreak of the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars retarded constitutional progress for a generation, and diverted the energies of the nation into other

<sup>1</sup> The Croats and Serbs speak the same language. See R. W. Seton-Watson, *Racial Problems in Hungary* (1908), 3.

channels. Hungary relapsed into her former condition, 1812-25  
until she was again awakened from her lethargy by the  
' Magyar Renaissance.'

Language is one of the most potent of all national bonds ; it enshrines the common memories and traditions which keep alive the sparks of nationality until they are ready to burst into a living flame. Conversely, the spread of a universal language is the most powerful solvent of national feeling. Now " by the middle of the eighteenth century," it has been said, " the Magyar language was in very real danger of dying out. Latin was the language of the Government, the administration, the law courts, of common intercourse between educated people ; and the astute policy of Maria Theresa had won over the great nobles of Hungary to German customs and ways of thinking. Contact with the Court and intermarriage with the Austrian aristocracy rapidly turned them into little better than Germans, and their demoralizing example had begun to spread among the gentry and educated classes, while the towns were mainly German already." <sup>1</sup> In short, the Racial Question of the Habsburg Empire was in a fair way of being solved on the lines of least resistance by the gradual extinction of racial consciousness. The imprudent attitude of Joseph II., however, was a direct challenge to Magyar pride. He flung all compromise to the winds and pursued a policy of violent assimilation. Even more important, perhaps, was the influence of the French Revolution in arousing the dormant forces of nationality. The French Revolution not only shattered the antiquated social and political regime which had survived from the Middle Ages, it also dispelled those cosmopolitan tendencies whose influence was specially marked in the eighteenth century. Thus the revival of national feeling in Hungary, viewed from the broadest standpoint, was part and parcel of a movement which was general throughout Europe, and was particularly conspicuous in Italy and Germany. For a period of thirteen years (1812-1825) the Hungarian Diet was in abeyance, but the County Assemblies, ' miniature parliaments,' attended

*Revival of  
national  
feeling  
among the  
Magyars.*

<sup>1</sup> Watson, *op. cit.* 38.

1825-48 — by the nobles, served to keep up the traditions of independence and self-government, and their resistance to the Government forced it to summon a meeting of the Diet in 1825. At this Diet the cry was raised that Magyar should be established as the official language of Hungary. This demand was the beginning of the Language Question, which deluged the Hungarian plains in blood and for many decades remained a burning subject of controversy in Hungarian politics. The next few years witnessed the rapid progress of the Magyar tongue; they have been described, indeed, as the golden age of Magyar literature. In 1840 Magyar became the language of the Government; parish registers were ordered to be drawn up in it; and it was made compulsory for the clergy of all denominations. Four years later Magyar was constituted the official language of public business and debates in Parliament, and at the same time it became the language employed in schools, or at least a compulsory part of the curriculum.

*The March  
Laws.*

Within twenty years the national aspirations of the Magyars, who alone enjoyed political power among the races of Hungary, had made great advance; but the demand for constitutional reform still remained unsatisfied. The permeation of Western ideas had transformed a movement, originally purely national and conservative, into a progressive and democratic movement. This new development made its influence felt in the proposals put forward in the Diets of 1844 and 1847, and it reached its zenith with the news of the revolutions at Paris and Vienna, news which fired the train already laid in Hungary. Under the inspiration of Kossuth the Address to the Crown demanded a national Government and a ministry responsible to Parliament. The revolutionary elements in the Diet were now in the ascendant. Their leader was Louis Kossuth, who had achieved a great reputation as editor of the *Pesti Hirlap*, a political journal commanding a wide circulation and extraordinary influence. It represented the extreme wing of the reform movement, the more conservative reformers finding a leader in Count Széchenyi. Kossuth's followers now seized the occasion to carry into operation the most extensive



and far-reaching changes. The famous March Laws of 1848 were the work of barely a month, and in this short space of time the social and political conditions of Hungary were completely revolutionized. The sweeping reforms embodied in these March Laws exhibited the twofold tendencies of the Hungarian movement, to which we have already drawn attention. On the one hand, the influence of Liberal ideas was seen in the establishment of a responsible Hungarian ministry, whose radical programme amply justified its existence. Serfdom, feudal dues, and the seigniorial courts were abolished; the nobles lost their immunity from taxation; the franchise, hitherto the exclusive possession of the nobility, was extended to every Hungarian owning property worth thirty pounds; the duration of Parliament was restricted to three years, and it was to be convoked annually; direct election of representatives was substituted for the old electoral system based upon the County Assemblies and the towns; while other measures included liberty of the press, religious freedom, a national guard, and a national University. On the other hand, the influence of national ideas was seen in the practical separation of Hungary from Austria. The Diet abolished those departments of State—the Hungarian Chancellery and the Palatinal Council—through which the central Government held Hungary in political subjection. They were replaced by an independent Hungarian Cabinet, whose sphere of authority covered not only the internal administration of Hungary, but also foreign affairs, war, finance, and the control of the army and fortresses. In addition Transylvania was united with Hungary, which was to be garrisoned for the future by Magyar troops. The Government at Vienna, powerless in the face of the catastrophe which had befallen it, conceded all the demands made upon it from Budapest. In this way Hungary was rendered independent of Austria, which was henceforth united to it only by the tie of common allegiance to the Habsburg House. The Magyars had thus achieved a great triumph, but its permanence would naturally depend upon the use which they made of their victory. Upon

1848 — this issue now turned the destinies of the Hungarian nation.

*The policy  
of com-  
pulsory  
Magyar-  
ization.*

If the Magyars had acted with moderation, the course of the Hungarian revolution would have run a different course. Unfortunately they claimed for themselves rights of nationality which they denied to others. They were only one among seven nationalities, and they numbered less than half the entire population. At the beginning of the present century, for example, the inhabitants of Hungary numbered nineteen millions, of whom about eight and a half millions were Magyars, and only ten millions possessed a knowledge of the Magyar tongue. It is true that the Magyars were the most virile of the Hungarian peoples, but this did not justify them in refusing racial equality to their neighbours. From the first they sullied their cause by acting with the arrogance of a dominant race, and their own intolerance forged the weapon which their enemies employed for their destruction. The law of 1840 by which Magyar was substituted for Latin as the official language of public administration was in the circumstances reasonable; and in process of time, owing to its superior culture, Magyar might well have become the common speech of the Hungarian nation. But the Magyar patriots, carried away by their enthusiasm, resolved on the rapid and complete Magyarization of their country, a policy which involved the racial extinction of all nationalities save their own. National life, it was proclaimed, is impossible without a national language, and the Magyars did not stop short of violent means in order to transform the non-Magyar races into 'genuine Magyars.' In a word, their idea was to wipe out all racial distinctions whatsoever in Hungary; they had already captured the administration, and they endeavoured to control also the pulpit and the schools with a view to the forcible introduction of the Magyar tongue. This policy of compulsory assimilation, which was also pursued in parts of the German Empire<sup>1</sup> and in Russia,<sup>2</sup> was the source of great unrest in Eastern Europe during the nineteenth century.

<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, p. 236 seq.

<sup>2</sup> *Infra*, p. 238 seq.

Other races in Hungary, however, were conscious of their nationality, and resented the oppression to which they were subjected. "Rather the Russian knout," said the North Hungarian Slavs, called Slovaks, "than Magyar domination, for the one could only enslave our bodies while the other threatens us with moral ruin and death." The French Revolution left its traces upon the Slovaks as upon the Magyars, and among them also the regeneration of the Slav language found expression in the growth of a native literature. In this linguistic revival two great names were prominent: Safarik, a professor, who collected the folk-songs and antiquities of the Slav race, and the national poet, Kollár, whose *Daughter of Slava* was published in 1824. This famous poem had a considerable political significance because it exalted the Slav name, revealing to the Slav world "the great memories of the Slav race, and its departed glories." Kollár protested against the unjust decree, "that in Hungary the Slav should bury his language." "Grant not the soil on which we dwell the sacred name of fatherland," he cried; "The true fatherland, which none can misuse, of which none can rob us . . . we carry in our hearts. . . . Dear are the woods, the streams, the homes inherited from our sires. But the sole fatherland which endures, and defies all shame and insult, is that unity of custom and language and mood which blends soul with soul." Elsewhere he added: "Scattered Slavs, let us be a united whole, and no longer mere fragments!" But he made clear that the Panslavism of his dreams was literary and not political, and the doctrine he enunciated in this connexion merits quotation. "It does not consist in a *political* union of all Slavs," he explained, "nor in demagogic agitation against the various governments and rulers, since this could only produce confusion and misfortune. Literary reciprocity can also subsist in the case of a nation which is divided into several States," or "which has several religions and confessions, and where differences of writing, of climate and territory, of manners and customs prevail. It is not dangerous to the temporal authorities and rulers, since it leaves frontiers and territories undisturbed, is content with

1848  
—  
*The North  
Hungarian  
Slavs.*



1848

the existing order of things, and adapts itself to all forms of government, and to all grades of civil life.”<sup>1</sup> It is not necessary for the cohesion of a State that all men should think alike, share a common speech, profess the same religion, and adopt uniform manners and customs. Unity does not demand uniformity and diversity is more often a source of strength than of weakness. What the Slovaks wanted was explicitly set forth in a petition to the Crown in 1842, in which they represented that they “form a peculiar nationality, which is only capable of further progress through the cultivation of its own language, and which has for centuries offered its life and property to the common fatherland, enjoying in return equal rights with the other races of Hungary.” But this perfectly reasonable claim to retain their language, and develop their own racial culture, was interpreted by the Magyars as a traitorous plea for autonomy and separation. Yet, even among the Magyars, moderate elements were not wanting to denounce a policy conducted on the narrowest racial lines, and voices were raised on behalf of the oppressed nationalities. The great Hungarian patriot, Count Stephen Széchenyi, whose loyalty was unquestioned since his economic writings had done so much for the regeneration of Hungary, warned his countrymen of the perilous course upon which they were embarking in their attempts to absorb the non-Magyar races by compulsion instead of by conciliation. “It is only our intellectual superiority,” he said, “that can attach these races to the Hungarian nationality”;<sup>2</sup> and he charged Kossuth with “goading [them] into madness against the Magyar nation.” But his remonstrance went unheeded and the Magyar politicians, blinded by racial passions, proceeded to plunge Hungary into all the horrors of civil strife.

*The South  
Hungarian  
Slavs.*

The linguistic monopoly asserted by the Magyars brought them into conflict not only with the Slavs of North Hungary, but also with the Southern Slavs—the Croats and Serbs. The latter were settled in the kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia, usually called Croatia, lying to the south-west of Hungary, with which it was politically united. There were also

<sup>1</sup> Watson, *op. cit.* 56.

<sup>2</sup> Francis Deák, *A Memoir* (1880), 57.

Serbs to the east of Croatia, in the plain known as the Banat. The Croats, apart from their representation in the Hungarian Diet, had their own provincial Diet at Agram, where they were able to organize resistance to the forcible introduction of the Magyar language. The antipathy between the Croats and the Magyars was shown in Kossuth's statement that he could not find Croatia on the map, and it stimulated the growth of national feeling. 'Illyrism,' as this national movement among the Southern Slavs was called, was at first only a literary movement; its organ was the *Illyrian National Gazette*, edited by Louis Gaj. The Magyars, however, saw in it a menace to their political ascendancy, and their relations with the Croats became embittered. To complete this survey of the racial situation it is necessary to add that two other nationalities, the Roumanians—who constituted two-thirds of the population of Transylvania, yet were treated by the Magyars with the utmost contempt—and also the Saxons, opposed the desire of the Magyars to incorporate Transylvania in the Hungarian State. The position of affairs in Hungary was thus extremely critical; and the fate of the Magyar nation, as we have already said, hung in the balance. In asserting their independence they had thrown down the gage to the Habsburg monarchy, and the privileges they had extorted from its weakness would have to be defended, sooner or later, at the point of the sword. At the same time they were ringed round by hostile nationalities, who outnumbered them by two to three millions, and whom their racial intolerance had driven into the arms of their enemies. It was clearly impossible to carry on a foreign war abroad and civil war at home, and the Magyar leaders committed an irreparable blunder when they refused to conciliate the other races by timely concessions. Kossuth failed to recognize the wisdom and expediency, as well as the justice, of a generous and liberal policy; and as the apostle of a narrow racial creed he showed himself deficient in true statesmanship. He told the Serb deputation, as early as April 1848, that "before there could be any question of an equal treatment of the Slavonian with the Magyar tongue, appeal would have to be



1848

made to the decision of the sword." The Slav nationalities took up the challenge and began to agitate for their separation from Hungary, the restoration of their ancient rights and traditional liberties, and the creation of a South-Slavonic State.

*Civil  
war in  
Hungary.*

The Croats found a leader in Baron Jellacic, the son of a Croatian nobleman, who had been appointed Ban (viceroy) of Croatia. He professed himself in favour of the 'Illyrian' movement, which had now a definite political object—the formation of a Slav kingdom under Habsburg rule. It is doubtful whether Jellacic was genuinely concerned about Slav national ideals, or whether from the first he worked for the restoration of the Imperial power. Certainly the net result of his policy was to divide Hungary into two armed camps, and so render inevitable the failure of the Magyar Revolution. In pursuance of the course of action which he had marked out for himself, he expelled Magyar officials, and summoned the Croatian Diet to meet on June 5 at Agram. As soon as it met, the Diet proceeded to repudiate the authority of the Hungarian ministry established at Budapest, and to decree the separation of Croatia from Hungary. The Serbs of the Banat also seized the occasion to rise in revolt against the Magyars; and a Serb national congress, held at Carlowitz, set up a provisional Government and made common cause with their kinsfolk of Croatia. The spirit of insurrection extended even to the Slavs of North Hungary (the Slovaks), but the terror inspired by the 'Kossuth gallows' paralysed the efforts of the Slovak leaders to organize an effective resistance among their countrymen. The Magyars thus found themselves in the anomalous position of carrying on two distinct wars, the one against German Austria, the other against Hungarian Slavs, fighting the former in order to secure those rights of free national development which they denied to the latter.

*The breach  
with  
Austria.*

The first step taken by the Magyars was to sow distrust between the Imperial Court at Innsbruck and the Ban of Croatia. Batthyány, the President of the Hungarian Cabinet, successfully worked upon the Emperor's fears that the real object of the 'Illyrian' movement was to establish an independent Slav Confederation; it is probable also



that the Imperial Court was relying upon Magyar assistance to restore order in Vienna. The outcome of Batthyány's visit to Innsbruck was an Imperial manifesto suspending Jellacic from his office, and condemning the attempt of the Roumanians and Saxons in Transylvania to make themselves independent of the Hungarian Government. Jellacic, however, managed to win over the Emperor to his point of view, and was allowed to keep his position. The Hungarian Diet, under the influence of Kossuth, now resolved to settle the Croatian question by an appeal to arms. For a time the Imperial Government refused to commit itself either on the side of the Magyars or of the Slavs, but two considerations speedily forced it to a decision. Kossuth's financial policy, the issue of Hungarian paper money in place of Austrian notes, was evidently designed to pave the way for a complete breach between Austria and Hungary. Yet the Austrian Government would still have shrunk from a conflict, had it not also received the news of Radetzky's victory at Custozza (July 25) and of his entrance into Milan.<sup>1</sup> The time for action, therefore, appeared ripe, and early in September the Ban of Croatia, with the approval of the Imperial Government, opened the campaign by crossing the Drave and invading Hungary at the head of a Croatian army.

In the opening stages of the war fortune favoured the arms of Austria. The Hungarian army attempted to relieve Vienna, but met with a serious repulse at Schwechat (October 30), and during the next few months suffered reverse after reverse. On January 5 the Austrian general, Windischgrätz, the conqueror of Vienna, occupied the Hungarian capital, which had already been evacuated by the Government. This was followed a few weeks later by an overwhelming defeat of the Magyars at Kapolna, after which the campaign appeared at an end and the triumph of the Austrians seemed completely assured. The course of events, however, showed that in war it is the unexpected which happens. When by all the rules of warfare the Magyars were hopelessly beaten, they suddenly developed unsuspected powers of resistance; and their spirit, so far from being quenched by defeat, drew

*Course of  
the struggle  
between  
Austria  
and  
Hungary.*

<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, p. 173.

1849

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fresh inspiration from the disasters which had befallen them. They threw themselves into the struggle with renewed ardour, and their achievements astonished a world which had given up their cause for lost. In Transylvania, Bem, the Polish veteran who had organized the defence of Vienna, drove the Austrians and Russians<sup>1</sup> across the frontier of Wallachia and made himself master of the country. In the south, Perczel subdued the Serbs of Slavonia and the Banat; while the main army under Görgei, who was now commander-in-chief, inflicted a succession of defeats on the Austrians, even compelling them to withdraw from Hungary. This was the climax of the struggle, and if the Magyars had shown political wisdom they might have obtained from the Austrian Government honourable terms of peace. But the destinies of Hungary were in the hands of Kossuth, who was now practically dictator, and with Kossuth counsels of moderation had no weight. On April 14, elated by his victories, he took the most fatal step in his career by issuing a Declaration of Independence, deposing the Habsburg dynasty and proclaiming a Republic. His action was a direct challenge to the principle of 'Legitimacy'; and as such it afforded an excuse for Russian intervention. The Tsar Nicholas I. was the relentless enemy of all progressive movements; a nineteenth-century Don Quixote, his divine mission was to succour distressed autocrats. While Jellacic again advanced from Croatia, and the Austrian army once more approached from the west, the Russians poured over the Carpathians and entered from the east. It was impossible for the Magyars, overpowered by sheer weight of numbers, to save a cause that was doomed. The Diet made a last despairing effort to retrieve the situation by removing the grievances of the non-Magyar races, and acknowledging their right to the free development of their language. But the concession came too late to reverse the tide of events, and on August 11, Kossuth abdicated in favour of Görgei and took refuge across the Turkish frontier.<sup>2</sup> Two days later the Hungarian army under

<sup>1</sup> Russian forces had come to the assistance of the Austrians.

<sup>2</sup> He died at Turin in 1895.

Görgei surrendered at Világos to the Russians, and the Hungarian Revolution forthwith collapsed. 1849

The Austrian Government proceeded to exact a barbarous penalty, condemning to death a considerable number of those implicated in the revolutionary movement—among them, thirteen generals and Count Batthyány, the late Premier, who had striven throughout to avert war—and also imprisoning a great many others. In other respects the results of the struggle were equally disastrous, and Hungarian political development received an immense setback. Indeed, the war brought neither satisfaction nor profit to any of the Hungarian nationalities. The Croats, who had rendered inestimable services to the Imperial Crown, were deprived of their Diet, while the Serbs of Southern Hungary, and the Saxons and Roumanians of Transylvania, were also denied the political privileges for which they had contended. The Magyars themselves lost every vestige of their constitutional liberties, and Hungary became a province of Austria like Bohemia. She ceased to be an independent national State, and her Constitution and administrative autonomy were completely suppressed. Croatia, Transylvania and Southern Hungary were made separate provinces, and the rest of Hungary was divided for administrative purposes into five districts. These measures entirely destroyed the political unity of the old Hungarian kingdom. The aim of Schwarzenberg, in fact, was to create a United Austrian State, and with this end in view he pursued a policy of the most rigid centralization. It was equally a policy of undisguised absolutism. “The former Constitution of Hungary,” it was officially announced, “is annulled by the Revolution.” The system of local government based on the County Assemblies was superseded, and administrative and judicial posts were filled by Austrian officials—Germans and Czechs. German was also substituted for Magyar as ‘the State language’; and the assimilating processes of Germanization were now in full swing. On the other hand, it is fair to remark that the social changes of 1848—the most abiding effect of the Hungarian Revolution—were not disturbed, but were

*Effects of  
the Revolution  
on  
Hungary.*



1849-60 — developed under the new regime. It was only on its political side that the work of the Revolution was so completely undone.

*The  
October  
Diploma.*

Nevertheless, in spite of the apparent strength of the Bach system,<sup>1</sup> "the centralizing and Germanizing absolutism," as Dr. Friedjung has justly remarked, "stood on a basis of clay, and was incapable of resisting any attack from without." Its weakness was exposed in the Italian War of Liberation, and the defeats of Magenta and Solferino<sup>2</sup> proved fatal to Austrian hegemony in Hungary no less than in Lombardy. The Bach system was doomed, and in 1860 the period of reaction in Hungarian history came to a sudden end. But while all parties in the Empire were agreed as to the necessity for political reconstruction, there was a divergence of opinion as to how reform could best be effected. The German Liberals wished to preserve the system of centralized administration inaugurated by Schwarzenberg, though they were willing to broaden its basis; in other words, they sought to establish a central Parliament for the whole Empire. The fundamental principle of the Bach system, administrative unity, was maintained as a guarantee of German ascendancy, but it was clothed in constitutional garb. It was thought that the concession of political liberty would induce the various nationalities to forgo their demand for a separate national existence in return for constitutional rights. But the Magyars and Slavs were not content to be merged into a German Empire, and their pertinacity extorted from the Crown the partial restoration of their lost privileges. The October Charter, or Diploma (1860), restored Hungary to the condition in which she was prior to the outbreak of the Revolution. It abolished the five administrative districts, and revived both the Diet and the system of self-government based on the County Assemblies, which obtained once more the right to appoint Hungarian officials. In this way administrative power was again vested in the hands of the Magyars, and taken away from the Germans, who were removed from their posts. The Charter thus brought to an end the absolutist regime;

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 138.

<sup>2</sup> *Infra*, p. 178.

and seemed to pave the way for the reconciliation of the Hungarian nationalities. But the Magyars did not rest satisfied with the revival of those institutions alone which had existed before 1848, and in their County Assemblies they demanded the enforcement of the March Laws. Their uncompromising attitude widened the breach between Austria and Hungary, and the Emperor found that he had sacrificed his authority without effecting any material improvement in the situation. To prevent Hungary breaking away from the Empire a new ministry was formed under Schmerling, who represented the 'centralist' policy of the German Liberals. The October Charter was now supplemented by the February Patent (1861), which framed a Constitution for the whole Empire, setting up an Imperial Diet elected from the provincial Parliaments, including that of Hungary. The February Patent proved no less unworkable than the October Charter. It reduced Hungary to the condition of a province, and amidst great excitement was unanimously rejected by the Hungarian Diet, which refused to send deputies to the *Reichsrath* at Vienna. The national leader of the opposition to Austria was Francis Deák, one of the noblest statesmen the nineteenth century produced. The watchword of his policy was "the recognition of the laws of 1848": "For these laws were enacted by the common consent of king and nation, and are therefore binding until repealed by common consent."<sup>1</sup> The famous Address, moved by Deák in the Diet of 1861, insisted upon the legal continuity of Hungarian political development, and asserted the historic principle that Austria and Hungary were joined only by a 'personal union,' based on allegiance to a common ruler. On these grounds the Address claimed "the complete restoration of our fundamental laws, our parliamentary government, and our responsible ministry."<sup>2</sup>

1861

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*The  
February  
Patent.*

Excitement in Hungary was now intense; the country seemed once more on the verge of revolution. The debates in the Diet breathed the spirit of stormy defiance which

*Com-  
parison of  
Deák and  
Kossuth.*

<sup>1</sup> Second Address of the Hungarian Diet: *Francis Deák*, 186.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 169.



1861-67 had animated the 'forties. But Deák was a different leader from Kossuth, at once wiser and more moderate in his demands. There is a marked contrast between the Revolution of 1848 and the movement which culminated in the bloodless victory of 1867. In the first place, Kossuth was a revolutionist, and Deák a constitutionalist. "You may blow up whole fortresses with gunpowder," was a saying of Deák's, "but you cannot build the smallest hut with it." Taking his stand on strictly legal grounds, he showed a sound and remarkable grasp of constitutional principles. Without the consent of the Hungarian people, so ran the argument, the king had no power to set aside the Constitution in favour of an Imperial Parliament endowed with functions usurped from the Hungarian Diet. "Where would be the guarantee of the constitutional independence of Hungary," he asked, "if at a future period a successor of your Majesty, appealing to this precedent, should act in the same manner with our other laws and rights, and should by a command of his own power and authority suppress or modify these without the previous consent of the nation?" In a constitutional State, laws can only be abrogated "by the power which brought them into existence."<sup>1</sup> These words might have fallen from the lips of an English statesman. Deák fought the battle of freedom, as Englishmen did in the seventeenth century, by appealing to the bar of history and the verdict of legal precedents. In the second place, Deák throughout the struggle with Austria remained loyal to the monarchy. He took no part in the War of Independence of 1849. "We have no desire," declared the Hungarian Diet in an Address drawn up by Deák, "to endanger the existence of the Empire. We do not wish to dissolve the union." It admitted the need for joint action in the 'common affairs' of the monarchy. But "a forced unity will never make the Empire strong. . . . The position of an Empire as a great Power, whose unity can only be maintained by force of arms, is precarious."<sup>2</sup> In the third place, Deák upheld the free development of the individual nationalities, and the equal rights of Magyars

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* 168, 182.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 189-191.



and non-Magyars, so far as this was not incompatible with the political unity of the Hungarian State. 1867

The October Charter of 1860 owed its origin to Solferino ; the Compromise of 1867 was the sequel of Sadowa.<sup>1</sup> The Emperor was alive to the necessity of conciliating his Hungarian subjects, who had held coldly aloof from the Austro-Prussian War, and in the event of another Austrian defeat might be tempted to make a second bid for independence. Deák was therefore approached with the question : " What does Hungary demand ? " He made the famous reply : " Hungary asks no more after Königgrätz than she asked before it." But the favourable situation in which Hungary was now placed as a result of the war necessarily gave her the advantage in any bargain she might make with the sovereign. She also found a powerful ally in the Austrian foreign minister, Baron Beust, an enemy of Bismarck. Beust was determined at all costs to recover for Austria the ascendancy she had lost in German affairs, and urged Francis Joseph to yield to the Magyars in order to win their support for an anti-Prussian policy. He carried his point, and in 1867 the relations of Austria and Hungary entered upon a new stage. The celebrated Compromise (*Ausgleich*) established what is known as the Dual Monarchy. Strictly speaking, it embodied no new principles, for the independence of the Hungarian kingdom had always been a political axiom, though one frequently violated in practice. But the *Ausgleich* made the position of Hungary absolutely impregnable. Henceforth she was placed on a footing of complete equality with Austria, and obtained supreme control over the administration of her internal affairs. The Constitution was restored on the lines of the March Laws, and a separate Hungarian ministry was set up. On the other hand, Deák, as we have seen, recognized that Austria and Hungary shared mutual interests ; united under one sovereign, it was expedient that they should co-operate for purposes of defence, and possess a common diplomatic service and a joint army. Hence the institution of a Common Ministry for the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, comprising ministers

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 73.

1867 — for foreign affairs, war, and finance. The ministry of finance administered the Imperial revenues, which defrayed the cost of the diplomatic service and the army. To establish control over the Common Ministers, a system of Delegations, or committees, was devised. These committees were two in number, one for Austria, the other for Hungary, each composed of sixty members, elected annually by their respective legislatures. In addition, economic conventions were drawn up between the two countries, regulating their commercial relations and custom tariffs.

Criticism  
of the  
*Ausgleich*.

Viewed from the broadest racial standpoint, the Compromise was one-sided. "While it is true to describe the *Ausgleich* as the logical outcome of the Pragmatic Sanction," which in 1723 established the legal independence of Hungary, "subsequent events have none the less shown it to rest upon a far more cynical basis than that of historic evolution. The real motive force which underlies the Dual System is a league between the two strongest races, the Germans and the Magyars, who divided the Monarchy between them, and by the grant of autonomy to the two next strongest races, the Poles and the Croats, made them their accomplices in holding down the remaining eight."<sup>1</sup> The Slavs advocated Federalism instead of Dualism—in other words, the autonomy of all nationalities which could lay claim to 'historic rights.' Bohemia, in particular, found herself denied the position to which she considered herself traditionally entitled. Thus the settlement of 1867 contained within it the seeds of future discord, while within Hungary herself the racial intolerance of the Magyars impaired the smooth working of the new institutions. Deák exhibited a statesmanlike grasp of the situation in the measures taken to reconcile the non-Magyars to the *Ausgleich*. To the Croats he offered the famous 'blank-sheet' to be filled in as they pleased. Croatia was given "complete autonomy in all matters of administration, justice, religion and education, and Croatian is everywhere the language of the legislature and executive." Foreign affairs alone remained the province of the Hungarian Diet, to which Croatia

<sup>1</sup> Watson, *Racial Problems in Hungary*, 137.

contributed forty members, while she had also her own Diet at Agram. At the same time an attempt was made to solve the vexed problem of the non-Magyar races in Hungary proper by the celebrated 'Law of Nationalities' (1868).<sup>1</sup> For the sake of the political unity of the State, Magyar was constituted the official language of Hungary both in Parliament and in all branches of the administration; but in the County Assemblies, courts of law and schools, the use of other languages was permitted. As the law stood, its provisions appeared on the whole just and equitable. While preserving the administrative unity of the State by the use of a common language, it afforded opportunity to the different nationalities for the development of their racial culture. It achieved the fundamental purpose of the Magyars as expressed in the preamble to the Law of Nationalities: "All citizens of Hungary . . . form from a political point of view one nation—the indivisible unitary Hungarian nation—of which every citizen of the fatherland is a member, no matter to what nationality he belongs." It equally satisfied the 'lawful national claims' of the different races comprised within the Hungarian State. Actually the Law of Nationalities seems to have been from the outset a dead letter. The condition of the Slovaks prior to the war of 1914-18 was summed up by a competent authority in these words: "Their language has been banished from all secondary schools, colleges and seminaries, and is being steadily expelled even from the primary schools. It is excluded from the administration and from every public office; even on the railways and in the post-offices Slovak inscriptions are not tolerated. The Slovak press has for years been subject to brutal persecution. Right of assembly or association does not exist for the unhappy Slovaks, or indeed for the other non-Magyar races of Hungary. The small intellectual class is the victim of official pressure and persecution in every imaginable form; and the most drastic steps are taken to prevent the Slovak people from securing its due representation in Parliament. Nowhere has the

1868  
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<sup>1</sup> Printed in Watson, *op. cit.* App. iii. The subject is exhaustively treated in *ibid.* 147 seq.



1868 — scandalous system of electoral corruption and violence weighed more heavy than among the Slovaks. . . . 'In Hungary the Magyar is the master.' The other races are mere helots." <sup>1</sup> Though half a century had elapsed since the *Ausgleich* created the Dualism of the Austrian Empire in the form in which it existed upon the eve of the war of 1914-18, the passage of time had not solved the racial problems of either Hungary or Austria. It had not reconciled the Roumanians, or the Serbs, or the Slovaks to the ascendancy of the Magyars, and it had not weakened the resolution of the Czechs to establish an autonomous Bohemian State. Thus the ground was prepared for the eventual dissolution of the Austrian Empire when it rashly exposed itself to the arbitrament of war.

<sup>1</sup> R. W. Seton-Watson, *The Future of Bohemia* (1915), 26.

## CHAPTER V

### THE UNITY OF ITALY

(1815-1870)

FOR centuries Italy, in the phrase of Metternich, was nothing more than a geographical expression. One attempt after another to weld the Peninsula into a united kingdom had failed. The barbarians who overran Western Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire rapidly established themselves in Britain, Spain and Gaul; but Italy was too choice a prize to remain the undisturbed possession of any one people. The very greatness of her traditions conspired to retard her political development by making her the target of every ambitious conqueror. The Ostrogoths who ruled the Peninsula in the sixth century did not long survive the death of their great King, Theodoric, and the State which he had built up soon crumbled to the dust. Their successors, the Lombards, only achieved a temporary triumph, and served but to add one more element of disunion to those which already existed. At a later period Italy was distracted by the rival claims of the Empire and the Papacy, and the strife of their supporters—the Ghibellines and the Guelphs—turned every city into a hotbed of faction and disorder. At the close of the Middle Ages a new, and even darker, page of Italian history opened with the expedition of Charles VIII. across the Alps. Italy now became the cockpit of Europe, where foreign Powers contended for mastery. Her native princes sacrificed national aspirations at the altar of self-aggrandizement, and did not hesitate to invoke the aid of the foreigner in their internecine quarrels. Deprived of her natural leaders, Italy sank into the degraded condition

1815  
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*Italy in  
the Middle  
Ages.*

1815

from which all the efforts of patriots like Machiavelli proved powerless to raise her.

Obstacles  
in the  
way of  
Italian  
unity.

In the nineteenth century more than one obstacle impeded the path of Italian unity. The most important was the fact that Italy lay under the heel of foreign domination. Austria was entrenched in the north; her satellites—princes of Austrian birth—ruled in Tuscany, Modena and Parma; while in the south a Bourbon dynasty governed the Two Sicilies (Naples and Sicily). Yet scarcely less important was the temporal power of the Papacy, which cut Italy into two halves, and was an insurmountable barrier to the unification of the Peninsula. The States of the Church had been created by Gregory I., the founder of the mediæval Papacy, at a time when the spiritual authority of the pontiff was the sole bulwark against Lombard aggression; and the temporal lordship then established was consolidated and extended by his successors in the chair of St. Peter. The weapon which Gregory had forged in the interests of Italy proved in the long run, however, detrimental to the best interests of Italy. It was impossible to unite Italy so long as she was divided by the Papal States; it seemed equally impossible to take from the Papacy a power backed by all the spiritual resources at its command. Lastly, the Italian people themselves had not yet attained to a full sense of national consciousness. Italy, like Greece, is a land where almost every spot has its own traditions and *genius loci*, a circumstance which served to accentuate local jealousies and to retard national growth. "In Italy," wrote Metternich, "provinces are against provinces, towns against towns, families against families, and—men against men."<sup>1</sup>

Italy and  
the French  
Revolution.

A new epoch began when Italy was drawn into the vortex of Napoleonic conquest. The Austrians and the Bourbons were driven from the Peninsula, the Papal States were annexed, and a uniform system of law and administration was everywhere established. These effects of French rule were evanescent: "Throughout Italy one stroke of the pen erased all our liberties, all our reforms, all our hopes. The old regime reappeared, pernicious as before, but

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs*, iii. 279.



surcharged with vengeance." <sup>1</sup> Yet the lesson that Italy was a nation, once learnt, was never forgotten. The Italian people had caught a glimpse of the Promised Land which was to be the goal of all their efforts for half a century, and its memories could never fade completely from their minds. Apart, moreover, from the temporary union which Italy had acquired, there was the priceless heritage bequeathed by the French Revolution, the privileges of equal rights before the law, religious liberty, freedom of the press, and self-government. As the tangible fruits of a national system of administration, they served to intensify the ardour and patriotism of the people.

At the Vienna Congress national aspirations were ignored, and Italy was treated merely as a pawn in the diplomatic game. Austria emerged as the preponderant Power in the Peninsula, and the sole arbiter of Italian destinies ; not only was she in actual possession of Lombardy and Venetia, but her influence controlled all the other States. A glance at the accompanying map will indicate the geographical situation of the different Italian States, whose political condition we have now briefly to describe. Lombardy and Venetia were constituted a kingdom under the direct rule of the Habsburg monarchy, but for administrative purposes they were divided into two provinces with separate governments centred in Milan and Venice. Elementary and secondary education were not neglected, but their effects were largely neutralized by the failure to give the educational system adequate scope. Fiscal burdens were extremely heavy ; although the population was not one-eighth of the Empire, it paid more than a fourth of the total revenue ; and all political activity was mercilessly repressed by a rigorous censorship and a tyrannical police system. Metternich confessed that " general dissatisfaction was prevalent." " The tedious progress of business " ; he wrote, " the design attributed to Your Majesty of wishing to give an entirely German character to the Italian provinces ; the composition of the courts, where the Italians daily see with sorrow German magistrates appointed to offices . . . are the main

1815

*Italy after  
the Vienna  
Congress.*

<sup>1</sup> Mazzini, *Italy, Austria and the Papacy*, 76.

1845 — causes to which this discontent is ascribed.”<sup>1</sup> Conditions were better in Parma, which was ruled by the widow of Napoleon, the well-meaning but weak Marie-Louise, and in Tuscany, “the only Italian State in which the corruption of a mild despotism has been preferred to the system of terror elsewhere dominant.” On the other hand, in Modena all the evils of the Austrian ‘system’ were reproduced, while the restoration of Victor Emmanuel to the throne of Piedmont was at once the signal for the introduction of a reactionary regime. His first act was an attempt to deprive his subjects of the benefits which the French Revolution had brought in its train: “Setting aside all other laws, henceforward our subjects shall obey the Royal Constitutions of 1770, together with the statutes made by our Royal predecessors before June 23, 1800.” The attachment of the people to the House of Savoy served to postpone for a time all chance of successful opposition, though the situation was full of menace for the Government. But nowhere were conditions so wretched as in Naples and the States of the Church. The Papal administration exhibited all the vices of an unregulated and chaotic tyranny, while Bourbon rule—which was disfigured by the worst excesses—was later to be described by William Gladstone as the “negation of God.”

*Mazzini's  
description  
of Italy  
in 1845.*

“We are a people,” wrote Mazzini in 1845, “of from one-and-twenty to two-and-twenty millions of men, known from time immemorial by the same name, as the people of Italy; enclosed by natural limits the clearest ever marked out by the Deity—the sea and the highest mountains in Europe; speaking the same language, modified by dialects varying from each other less than do the Scotch and the English; having the same creeds, the same manners, the same habits . . . proud of the noblest tradition in politics, science and art, that adorns European history; having twice given to Humanity a tie, a watchword of Unity—once, in the Rome of the Emperors, again, ere they had betrayed their mission, in the Rome of the Popes; gifted with active, ready and brilliant faculties . . . rich in every source of

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs*, iii. 103.

material well-being that, fraternally and liberally worked, could make ourselves happy, and open to sister nations the brightest prospect in the world.

1845  
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“ We have no flag, no political name, no rank, among European nations. We have no common centre, no common fact, no common market. We are dismembered into eight States—Lombardy, Parma, Tuscany, Modena, Lucca, the Papedom, Piedmont, the kingdom of Naples—all independent of one another, without alliance, without unity of aim, without organized connexion between them. Eight lines of custom-houses, without counting the impediments appertaining to the internal administration of each State, sever our material interests, oppose our advancement, and forbid us large manufactures, large commercial activity, and all those encouragements to our capabilities that a centre of impulse would afford. Prohibitions or enormous duties check the import and export of articles of the first necessity in each State of Italy. Territorial and industrial products abound in one province that are deficient in another ; and we may not freely sell the superfluities or exchange among ourselves the necessities. Eight different systems of currency, of weights and measures, of civil, commercial and penal legislation, of administrative organization, and of police restriction, divide us, and render us as much as possible strangers to each other. And *all* these States among which we are partitioned are ruled by *despotic* Governments, in whose working the country has no agency whatever. There exists not in any of these States, either liberty of the press, or of united action, or of speech, or of collective petition, or of the introduction of foreign books, or of education, or of anything. One of these States, comprising nearly a fourth of the Italian population, belongs to the foreigner—to Austria ; the others, some from family ties, some from a conscious feebleness, tamely submit to her influence.” <sup>1</sup>

In these circumstances the prospects of a United Italy seemed remote. Confronted with arbitrary and suspicious Governments, debarred from freedom of political discussion, *Secret societies.*

<sup>1</sup> Mazzini, *op. cit.* 71-73.



1820

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jealously and rigorously controlled in all their movements, Italian patriots could only find an outlet for their energies in secret societies, or 'sects,' which now everywhere sprang up, but were particularly formidable in Naples. Whatever our opinion of these societies, whose activities were so marked a feature of the generation which followed the Vienna Congress, it must be remembered that they were the outcome of a system which closed up all other avenues of political activity. "We Italians," cried Mazzini, "have neither Parliament, nor hustings, nor liberty of the press, nor liberty of speech, nor possibility of lawful public assemblage, nor a single means of expressing the opinion stirring within us." He added, in words from which we can still draw inspiration: "Whenever a way remains open to you in a just cause for the employment of moral force, never have recourse to violence; but when every moral force is seared up—when tyranny stretches so far as formally to deny you the right of expressing in any manner soever what you conceive to be the truth—when ideas are put down by bayonets—then, reckon with yourself: if, though convinced [that] justice is on your side, you are still in a weak minority, fold your arms and bear witness to your faith in prison or on the scaffold—you have no right to imbrue your country in a hopeless civil war: but if you form the majority, if your feeling prove to be the feeling of millions, rouse yourselves, and beat down the oppression by force." "It is not the country," he told the English people, "that honours the memory of Hampden, of Pym, of Vane, and of other great republicans, that can successfully adduce against us a theory of Oriental submission."<sup>1</sup> In Naples the *Carbonari*, as they were called, were recruited from all the discontented elements whom the rule of Ferdinand I. had stirred up against his throne, and their influence was seen in the revolt which broke out in 1820. Inspired by the example of the revolution in Spain, the insurgents forced the hand of the Neapolitan King and wrested from him a Constitution, but elated by their easy victory they neglected to take adequate precautions against their real

The insurrections  
of 1820.

<sup>1</sup> Mazzini, *op cit.* 85-86.

enemy—Austria. Ferdinand, in violation of his pledges to his subjects, treacherously summoned the Austrian army to his assistance. The rebels misjudging the difficulties of their situation wasted valuable opportunities, and their overthrow at the battle of Rieti speedily brought the insurrection to an ignominious conclusion. Whilst the embers of one revolt were being stamped out in Naples, another was being lighted in Piedmont. Here, also, the object of the rising was to establish a Constitution, and the King was faced with the alternative of giving way to the wishes of his people—a step involving war with Austria—or crushing the revolution by force. Victor Emmanuel shrank from either course, and cut the Gordian knot by abdicating the throne. He was succeeded by his brother, Charles Felix, during whose absence the regency was vested in Charles Albert. The latter, who was destined to play a conspicuous part in the liberation of Italy, was already known for his Liberal sympathies, and he was induced by the insurgents to proclaim the Constitution. But the concession was immediately revoked by the new King, and Charles Albert, remaining loyal to his allegiance, abandoned the movement. Civil war ensued, and at the battle of Novara the support of Austria was again decisive in bringing victory to the side of absolutism.

1830  
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The years which followed these abortive attempts at revolution in Naples and Piedmont were clouded with gloom for the Italian people. Reaction had triumphed, and it spared no efforts to intimidate the nation into complete submission. The severity of the Austrian regime was intensified, but while the immediate outbreaks which it provoked were ruthlessly repressed, it paved the way for its ultimate downfall by the hatred which it everywhere excited. Italy did not escape the effects of the French Revolution of 1830, which was the cause of outbreaks in Modena, Parma and the Papal States. The hope of French assistance proved, however, illusory. Louis Philippe was admonished by Metternich not to “embarrass the protective action which we may be commissioned from the highest quarters to take.” Austria was given a free hand, and her

*The insurrections of 1830.*

1815-30 intervention proved fatal once more to all prospects of success.

*Austria  
and Italy.*

The experience gained in these premature revolts, though purchased at a heavy price, was not without value. It focussed attention upon the real problem which confronted the Italian people—the need for the expulsion of the foreigner. It imprinted upon the heart of every Italian the supreme lesson that all efforts were unavailing, unless directed first and foremost towards the overthrow of Austrian domination. Upon the consummation of this design all parties in Italy were now agreed. No argument, indeed, was needed to convince the nationalists that Italy could never achieve an independent existence, or work out her national destiny untrammelled, whilst she still remained under the Habsburg yoke. But the constitutionalists equally recognized that the principles of their faith, ‘Liberty, Equality and Humanity,’ would continue to bear barren fruit so long as the hand of Metternich choked all the seeds of Liberalism. The pettiest Italian tyrant, as the events of 1821 and 1830 had demonstrated, was omnipotent against his subjects, when backed by the resources of the Austrian Empire; and since Austria was committed irrevocably to the doctrine of ‘Legitimacy,’ her forces were always at the disposal of every ruler, irrespective of the merits of the dispute. “The political order of things established in 1815,” said Metternich, “has made Austria the natural warder and protector of public peace in Italy.”<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, he set himself with sleepless vigilance to resist all innovations in government from the conviction that the wheels of revolution, once put in motion, would travel beyond the course intended by its authors. This was doubtless true, but it was a fundamental error not to recognize that progressive tendencies, when artificially checked, are only apt to produce more violent forms of change. Metternich’s policy found signal expression in the secret clause of a treaty concluded in 1815 with Ferdinand I. of Naples: “It is agreed between the two high contracting parties that his majesty the King of the Two Sicilies, in

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs*, iii. 434.



restoring the Government of his Kingdom, will not admit any change that is not in accordance with the ancient institutions of the monarchy, and with the principles adopted by "the Austrian Emperor" for the internal administration of his Italian provinces."<sup>1</sup> The price of Austrian protection was thus Austrian tutelage. Hence to extirpate the grinding oppression of arbitrary and capricious despots, and to reap the golden harvest of a freer life, the first and indispensable step was to drive the foreigner from Italian soil.

Unity of aim is not incompatible with diversity of opinion as to how the aim shall be accomplished. Austria was the common foe, and the overthrow of her ascendancy was placed in the foreground of all political programmes. But the efforts of Italian patriots were weakened by their failure to formulate a single line of action; they sought to mould the destinies of their country in different ways, and mutual distrust impeded their cordial co-operation. In the main, we can distinguish three schools of thought: the republicans, the federalists, and the adherents of the House of Savoy.

The republicans were followers of Giuseppe Mazzini, the prophet of the Italian movement. Exiled in 1831 for alleged conspiracy he proceeded to establish the society of 'Young Italy,' for in the youth of Italy he looked to find the salvation of his country. "Place youth at the head of the insurgent multitude," he counselled, "you know not the secret of the power hidden in these youthful hearts, nor the magic influence exercised on the masses by the voice of youth. You will find among the young a host of apostles of the new religion." He gathered round him a multitude of ardent spirits, inflamed with patriotic fervour, and willing to endure the severest hardships in the faith that "ideas grow quickly when watered with the blood of martyrs." In the pursuit of their mission the disciples of Mazzini were told to "climb the mountains and share the humble food of the labourer; to visit the workshops and the artisans, hitherto neglected; to speak to them of their rights, of their memories of the past, of their past glories, of their former commerce; to recount to them the endless oppression

1830-46

*Italian schools of thought.**(1) Mazzini.*

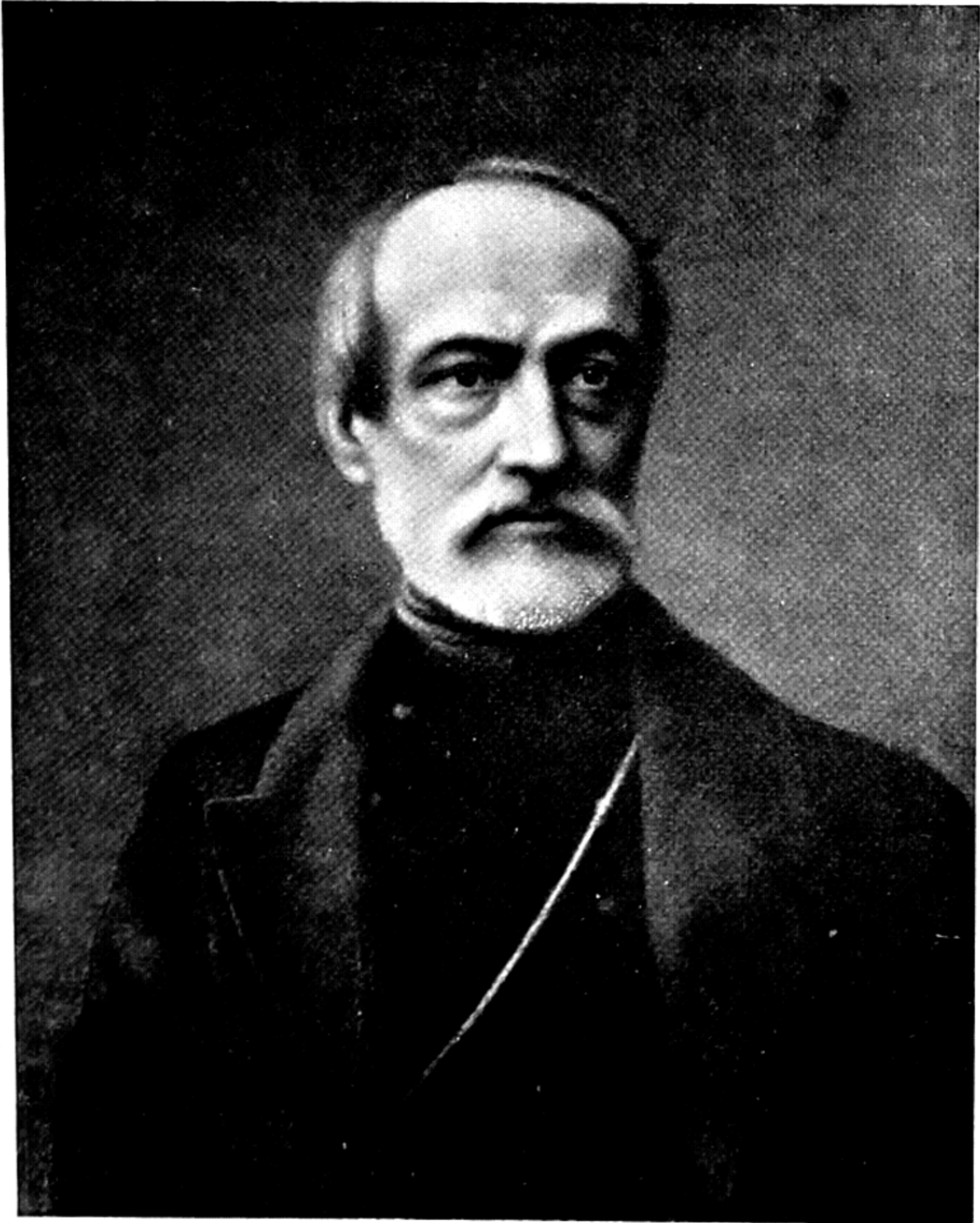
<sup>1</sup> C. Segrè, "Italy" in *Camb. Mod. Hist.* x. 110.

1830-46 — of which they were ignorant because no one took it on himself to reveal it.”<sup>1</sup> It is the peculiar merit of Mazzini that, more than any other man, he grasped the vision of a United Italy, and set himself with all the ardour of one who preaches a new religion to make his countrymen share in that vision. “Italy,” he wrote, “wills to be a nation; and one she must become, happen as it may. As certain as I am writing these words, this age will not pass away ere the protocols of the Treaty of Vienna shall have served for wadding—*perhaps on the march to Vienna itself*—for the muskets of our Italian soldiery.”<sup>2</sup> Mazzini’s task was to educate the Italian nation to realize that it was a nation and not a ‘geographical expression,’ to drive home the conviction that the whole Peninsula, though divided by artificial political barriers, was a living unity with a common heritage of traditions and historic memories. His appeal was addressed to “men speaking the same language, treading the same earth, cradled in their infancy with the same maternal songs, strengthened in their youth by the same sun, inspired by the same memories, the same sources of literary genius.”<sup>3</sup> The *Carbonari* had served a useful purpose in keeping alive the spirit of patriotism, but their lack of organizing capacity was a fatal flaw in their movement. “From the want of known leaders,” wrote Metternich, “and of concerted action among themselves, the sects [secret societies] are not nearly so dangerous as we might fear.” Their strength was frittered away in local outbreaks, which were powerless to achieve anything but a temporary success. So long as unity of action was divorced from unity of purpose, failure was a foregone conclusion; so long as the revolutionaries relied upon isolated efforts, they were bound to meet with disaster. One part of Italy must fight shoulder to shoulder with another if victory was to be assured; in 1821 Piedmont did not rise until the Neapolitans had been practically crushed, and in 1830 the revolts were sporadic and ill-designed. The futility of this narrow policy may well seem obvious to us in the light of

<sup>1</sup> C. Segrè, *op. cit.* 121-122.

<sup>2</sup> Mazzini, *op. cit.* 115.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 51.



MAZZINI (1805-1872)

*E. Brogi*

*Mazzini*





history, but it needed a succession of failures to impress it upon the minds of the people ; and without the teaching of Mazzini the lesson might never have been learnt at all. In any case, Mazzini merits all the honour due to a pioneer whose life was devoted to the pursuit of a great ideal. His propaganda broadened the political horizon of Italians and created a vigorous public opinion in favour of national independence ; hence amongst the makers of modern Italy he holds an imperishable place. 1830-46 —

But while Mazzini gave to the Italian world the ideal of a United Italy, it was reserved for other men to translate his ideal from theory into fact. Mazzini was a republican ; the new State was to be built upon democratic foundations. The spontaneous rising of the whole people to throw off the yoke of foreign oppression would emancipate them at the same time from their bondage to monarchical rule. This part of Mazzini's dream, however, remained unfulfilled. Practical men preferred to pin their faith to the House of Savoy, and the efficacy of organized force. Italian opinion turned to Piedmont, because alone among Italian States she possessed an army of sufficient pretensions to cope with Austria in the field, and her claims to leadership in the coming struggle could also be defended on other grounds, more especially her comparative immunity from any foreign intermixture. As early as 1817 Metternich remarked that " the Turin Cabinet entertains ambitious views which can only be gratified at the expense of Austria." <sup>(2) *The House of Savoy.*</sup> <sup>1</sup> Piedmont was now ruled by Charles Albert, who had come to the throne in 1831. Allusion has already been made to his equivocal conduct during the revolt of 1821, and another insurrection, a dozen years later, was repressed by him with excessive severity. But events were to prove the truth of his assertion that " to my dying day the words ' Patriotism ' and ' Freedom from Foreign Rule ' will cause my heart to throb." " When the opportunity occurs," he declared, " my life, my sons' lives, my arms, treasure and all, will be expended for the cause of Italy." Meanwhile the wisdom of his administration encouraged the hopes of those who saw in

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs*, iii. 98.

1846 — the House of Savoy the salvation of Italy. "We shall march," he said, "with the times"; and a number of salutary reforms were set on foot, designed to transform Piedmont into a modern State, and to prepare her for the work of national reconstruction.

(3) *The  
Federal-  
ists.*

For the moment, however, a section of Italian patriots were attracted by the glamour of Gioberti's proposals in his famous *Primato*; and, extravagant though they seemed, they were destined to exercise a remarkable influence upon the shaping of events. His scheme had at least the merit of originality, for at its inception it was without parallel among the multitude of ideas with which the political situation was flooding contemporary literature. It was nothing less than to constitute the Pope head of an Italian league composed of the different States associated together in a Federation. For centuries the temporal power of the Papacy had been regarded as the main obstacle to the resuscitation of Italy; it was now designed as the basis upon which a united and regenerated Italy should be built up. A reformed Papacy, raised from its degradation, was to resume under altered conditions its former duel with the Empire, and to fulfil once more its historic rôle of championing the interests of Italy against foreign intruders.

*The  
Liberal  
Pope.*

Of all the solutions of the Italian Question, that of the Federalists and Neo-Guelphs appeared in the light of history the most remote. Yet the strange irony of events decreed that it should be afforded the first chance of fulfilment. In 1846 Pius IX. ascended the papal throne, and from this moment dates the dawn of Italian liberation, the beginning of the revolution which was ultimately to end in the expulsion of the foreigner and the unification of the Peninsula. After wandering thirty years in a wilderness of disappointed hopes, the Italian people had at last approached the threshold of the Promised Land, and the political structure established at the Vienna Congress forthwith began to crumble to the dust. The new Pope was believed to be anti-Austrian and a Liberal; he had studied the writings of Gioberti, which seem to have exercised the same influence over him as Bolingbroke's *Patriot King* over George III. Accordingly,



his accession was greeted with boundless enthusiasm, a token of the yearning with which Italy awaited the coming of a leader. His first step appeared to justify the expectations which his election had aroused: he proclaimed an Amnesty for all political offenders. Whether intentionally or not, this act amounted to a virtual defiance of Austria; it meant that in the eyes of the Church patriotism was no longer stigmatized as a crime. "We were prepared for everything," confessed Metternich, "except for a Liberal Pope; now we have got one, there is no answering for anything." The Amnesty was followed by other measures, such as the institution of a Council of State, the membership of which was thrown open to laymen, the establishment of a municipality in Rome, and the formation of a civic guard. These spontaneous reforms on the part of the most conservative Government in Italy were interpreted throughout the Peninsula as a call to arms. The Sicilians were the first to move; they rose in revolt, and within less than a month had reduced the whole island except Messina. A constitutional Government was set up, and the galling chains of Bourbon despotism were discarded. Alarmed for the safety of his mainland kingdom, Ferdinand II. hastened to forestall a revolutionary movement in Naples by granting a Constitution. In this way he also thought to punish the Pope for his patronage of the Liberal movement, since the whole Italian people would now raise the cry for a constitutional system of Government. This expectation was speedily fulfilled. The Pope was compelled to follow Ferdinand's example and proclaim a Constitution, while the precedent which Naples had set was also imitated by Leopold of Tuscany. Charles Albert, recognizing the importance of enlisting Liberal sympathy in the struggle which seemed imminent, issued an edict giving to Piedmont the Constitution which was one day to serve as the basis of the new Italian State. At the same time events in Austria deepened the conviction that the hour of Italian emancipation was at hand. Vienna, the very citadel of Metternich's power, had revolted against his system of government, and in an instant the minister had fallen. The Habsburg Empire,

1846-48

1848

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stripped of all its pretensions, appeared after all but a house of cards which would go to pieces at the first touch of organized resistance. With the confidence born of this belief, the Italian provinces of Austria promptly seized the occasion to make common cause with the neighbouring States in a general movement to achieve national independence. Milan in the *Cinque Giornate* (the Five Glorious Days) compelled the Austrian forces under Radetzky to evacuate the city. Venice immediately followed suit, driving out the garrison and proclaiming the Republic of St. Mark.

The war  
of 1848.

Everything now turned upon the course of action which the King of Piedmont would resolve to pursue. Cavour gave utterance to the famous exhortation: "The hour of fate has struck for the Sardinian monarchy. One road only is open, that of immediate war." Hitherto Charles Albert, a devout son of the Church, had been reluctant on religious grounds to draw the sword against a great Catholic Power. But in 1847 Austria, taking up the gage thrown down to her by the reforming party, had occupied Ferrara despite the Pope's protests. This blunder, for it proved to be no less, gave Charles Albert an opportunity to pose as defender of the Church, and to invest a war for the sacred rights of nationality with the character of a crusade for the sacred rights of religion. Accordingly he now accepted the invitation of Milan to intervene on its behalf, and taking the field against Austria, he assumed responsibility for the conduct of the war. All Italy flocked to his banners, for no State dared to withstand the popular enthusiasm. The Pope, the Duke of Tuscany, even Naples, were all forced to join in the struggle. The Piedmontese won the victory of Goito over the Austrian general Radetzky, but they failed to pursue their advantage and allowed the enemy to retake Vicenza, Padua, and other places in Venetia, until Venice alone remained. This supineness was the more inexplicable since Radetzky had been fighting with inferior forces, and a vigorous offensive would have cut him off from his communications and prevented the arrival of reinforcements. It proved disastrous not only in a military, but in a political sense, for it furnished an opportunity to the Italian Govern-

ments to withdraw from a cause which they had only embraced with reluctance. The counsels of Pius IX. had long been distracted by his conflicting obligations as an Italian ruler, pledged to co-operate in the expulsion of the foreigner, and as a Catholic pontiff, of whose spiritual dominion the Austrian monarchy was the main prop. It was impossible to reconcile interests so divergent, and Pius decided to sacrifice his interests as a secular prince. In the famous Encyclical of April 1848 he declared to the world that war with Austria was "wholly abhorrent from the counsels" of a Pope. This announcement was significant in more ways than one; primarily it meant that the dream which had inspired Gioberti's *Primato* had collapsed. The plan of a Federation was definitely set aside, for the leadership of the Italian cause could never be entrusted to a Government which had shirked its responsibilities at a conjuncture so favourable to a fortunate issue. The immediate result was to encourage the King of Naples to overthrow the Constitution of the southern kingdom and recall his forces from the front.

1848  
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The defection of her allies left Piedmont to carry on the struggle with Austria single-handed; but the situation might still have been retrieved, if Charles Albert had thrown off his irresolution and displayed the energy which the conduct of a military campaign demanded. Undeterred by the papal Allocution, the States of Central and Northern Italy—Venetia, Parma, Piacenza, and Modena—passed a series of plebiscites in favour of their incorporation with the kingdom of Piedmont; while the Sicilians also offered their crown to the second son of the Sardinian King. But within a short time the King suffered a severe defeat at Custozza; and, after the capitulation of Milan, was forced to conclude the Salasco Armistice which restored to Austria her territorial possessions in Upper Italy, although Venice continued to hold out in her resistance.

*Course of  
the war.*

The movement which had opened so auspiciously for the redemption of Italy was now upon the verge of complete disaster. Austria, though crippled by internal weakness, had shown unexpected powers of resistance, and the tenacity

*Its col-  
lapse.*



Italy, however, was not to remain for ever from the very mouth of the infant. After the death of Victor Emmanuel, Charles Albert, to whom the kingdom of Sardinia had passed, Italy an ambition which he had not been able to fulfil, and the cause of his nation, and was the first to make a declaration of independence. The revolution of 1848, which had proclaimed a republic of Rome, was now spreading the contagion to Piedmont, the Pope passing to France, and a provisional government was soon set up. The revolution, however, did not lead to the final consummation which was the end of the first and most disastrous period of the Italian War of Independence. Piedmont, although she accepted the truce with Austria and recklessly joined the war, was not within eleven days after the beginning of the campaign, the issue was decided on the field of Novara in Austria's favour. Charles Albert, worn out by his struggles, and to enable Piedmont to obtain better conditions in the peace negotiations, abdicated his throne in favour of his son Victor Emmanuel II, and departed into exile. Thus ending with his martyrdom his devotion to the Italian cause, the struggle of reaction reached its culminating point when France intervened on behalf of the Pope, and the efforts of Garibaldi's gallant efforts overthrew the Roman Kingdom, and when simultaneously the Duke of Savoy was restored to his duchy and the heroic resistance of Venice was finally overborne.

Italy, once more a geographical expression, relapsed into her former condition. A heavy price was exacted for the efforts she had made to shake off the Austrian yoke. The retrogrades, making fear the buttress of their power, inaugurated a reign of terror and indulged in an orgy of excesses which awakened the moral indignation of all Europe. The Italian princes had been tried, and with one exception they had been found wanting. The exception was Piedmont, and the misfortunes of Charles Albert were not endured in vain since they evinced to the sincerity of the House of Savoy and linked its fortunes indissolubly with the future development of Italy. Meanwhile the happy destiny of Piedmont was raising up for her a great statesman in the person of Cavour, whose life-work constitutes



COUNT CAVOUR (1810-1861)

From the Painting by Carnevali in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence





the history of the Italian War of Liberation in its second phase. Cavour came to the head of the Government in 1852, and with one short interval of a few months enjoyed a tenure of power which lasted eight years. His achievements in the domestic sphere merit some notice, for they not only served to rally round the Minister the important body of Liberal opinion, but they laid the foundations of an organized and consolidated State—the necessary prelude to an efficient foreign policy. Cavour reformed the finances, developed the railway system, lowered commercial tariffs, adopted an enlightened social and agrarian policy, and improved the military defences. He recognized, in fact, that the only sound basis for a vigorous policy abroad is a contented and prosperous population at home, and the wisdom of his economic administration was rewarded by the loyalty with which the nation supported all his foreign undertakings.

1852  
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From the first moment of office Cavour set before himself the supreme task of resuming the heroic struggle with Austria, temporarily interrupted by the catastrophe which had befallen Charles Albert. How well he accomplished his task is written imperishably in the history of the modern Italian kingdom, whose political unity is the best testimony to the enduring value of his work. With the vision and judgment of a true statesman Cavour grasped the vital condition of success—the isolation of Austria. Piedmont was too weak to cope single-handed with the Central Empire, and the European Powers looked askance at any violation of the Treaties of 1815. Without an ally Italian resistance would break to pieces beneath the diplomatic pressure which would certainly be brought to bear in order to maintain the *status quo*. It was necessary, therefore, to secure for Piedmont a sympathetic hearing in the councils of Europe, then to enlist the active co-operation of some great military Power, and finally to take up arms when Austria, goaded into war, should appear guilty of wanton aggression. The skill with which Cavour drew the net round Austria, and achieved all the points of this programme, was a masterpiece of diplomacy. His first step was taken when he inter-

Cavour's  
aims and  
methods.

1853-56 — vened in 1853 on behalf of the political refugees from Lombardy and Venetia, whose property had been sequestrated by the Austrian Government. The intervention failed in its immediate object, but it was approved by England and France, and revealed Piedmont as the champion of oppressed Italians. The real turning-point, however, came in 1855 with the momentous decision of Cavour to participate in the Crimean War, a decision which enhanced the prestige of the Sardinian monarchy and gave it a claim upon the gratitude of its allies. At the same time it completed the isolation of Austria, which lost the friendship of Russia by her ingratitude,<sup>1</sup> and estranged the Western Powers by her vacillation. At the Congress of Paris (1856) Cavour denounced the evils of Austrian oppression in Italy, and his disclosures shamed Austria into moderating the harshness of her rule. But the day for conciliatory measures had passed beyond recall. Daniele Manin, the eminent patriot, voiced the general sentiment when he declared: "We do not want Austria to mend her ways in Italy; we want her to go."

*Napoleon  
III. and  
Italy.*

In England public opinion was deeply sympathetic towards the Italian nationalists, but her statesmen considered themselves still pledged to the Treaties of 1815, and could not be relied upon to lend material assistance. Cavour therefore turned to France, and in the Emperor he found the ally whose encouragement and military support were indispensable for the furtherance of his schemes. Napoleon III. was induced by a variety of motives to assume an active part in the Italian movement. He was sprung from an Italian house, and in his early days had fought in the ranks of Italian insurgents. Mingled with personal inclinations and an unfeigned interest in the Italian cause were his imperial ambitions. He was the inheritor of the Napoleonic traditions; and, as interpreted by a warm though unstable imagination, they seemed to invest him with the championship of all oppressed nationalities. Moreover, he had a strong hereditary reason for seeking to discredit the settlement of 1815, apart from the more ignoble motive of creating

<sup>1</sup> See p. 150.

a general turmoil in order to fish in troubled waters. As early as 1855 he had given an inkling of his intentions by his famous question to Cavour : " What can be done for Italy ? " Three years later the situation had matured sufficiently for the holding of a conference at Plombières, where Napoleon secretly met Cavour and promised his aid in return for the cession of Savoy to France. At this time Cavour's calculations apparently did not travel beyond the expansion of Piedmont into the kingdom of Upper Italy by the absorption of the provinces wrested from Austria. He did not yet contemplate the formation of a United Italy, for the Pope was to remain undisturbed in Rome, while the Bourbon dynasty was to retain possession of Naples. Six months afterwards the secret engagement, into which Napoleon had been induced to enter, became transparent to the whole world. The Emperor himself revealed it in addressing the Austrian ambassador with the words : " I regret that our relations are not as satisfactory as formerly." This utterance created a profound impression, which was deepened by the speech of Victor Emmanuel at the opening of his Parliament a few days later : " With all our respect for treaties," ran the memorable words of the King, " we are not insensible to the cry of pain which rises towards us from so many parts of Italy." It was impossible to mistake the significance of this warning ; thousands of volunteers poured into Piedmont, and the hopes of Italian patriots mounted high as they waited for the moment when the banner of Piedmont would again be unfurled in the cause of Italy.

Events were now marching rapidly, and it was the policy of Cavour to hasten the crisis. He held in his hands all the diplomatic threads, but at any moment they might snap. The great statesman had accurately gauged the mercurial temperament of Napoleon, whose varying moods changed with every hour, and he also knew that the Emperor's native irresolution was being reinforced by the difficulties of the internal situation in France—the opposition of the Clericals. Moreover, as the chancelleries of Europe were swift to recognize, there lurked all the danger of a universal conflagration in a French advance upon Italy ; and they had proposed

1858

*War with  
Austria.*



1859 — a Congress of the Powers as the best means of preserving peace. But a Congress was the last thing that Cavour wanted, for it meant the shipwreck of all his hopes. The experience of half a century had shown that Congresses were more concerned to devise checks and balances than to satisfy whole-heartedly the claims of nationality. The situation was thus extremely critical when Austria, whose diplomacy was immeasurably inferior to that of her astute and resourceful adversary, played into Cavour's hands. It was obviously her policy to wait in patience while the alliance between Piedmont and France inevitably went to pieces under the weight of European disapproval. Indeed Piedmont, overborne by the tyranny of circumstances, was actually on the point of disarmament when the war party in Austria carried the day, and sent her an ultimatum. "The die is cast," cried Cavour in an outburst of joy, "and we have made history." In the face of overwhelming difficulties he had achieved the end for which he had so long laboured. Austria had committed the folly of declaring war at the very time when the Powers were working for peace, and so had afforded Piedmont an adequate pretext for taking up the challenge thrown down to her.

*Napoleon's  
defection.*

The war opened with the Austrian invasion of Piedmont (April 1859). Victor Emmanuel and Napoleon took the field at the head of their forces, and a rapid succession of victories culminating in the battle of Solferino attended their arms. But misfortunes still continued to mar the destiny of Italy, for the moment she was about to drain her cup of triumph it was again dashed from her lips. At the height of success, when the destruction of Austria seemed assured, Napoleon drew back, and in return for the surrender of Lombardy to Piedmont concluded peace at Villafranca (July 1859). His action has been severely criticized, and the bitter grief of Cavour, who was completely stunned by the wreck of his well-laid plans, shows that it came as a complete surprise. Yet in truth nothing less might have been expected from the impressionable character of Napoleon III., who was accessible to every conflicting emotion and swayed by every passing breeze. It must be confessed also

that the difficulties of his position placed him in an emergency full of imminent peril. Prussia showed marked uneasiness lest his victories should tempt the Emperor to extend the frontier of France towards the Rhine, and so fulfil the ambition which the French people had never ceased to cherish; and she had already seized the pretext to arm in defence. Moreover Napoleon was not a little disconcerted by the lightning-like rapidity with which Austrian resistance was collapsing; he felt that the control of the situation was slipping from his grasp, and that events would shape themselves without reference to his own particular interests. Nor were his misgivings entirely unwarranted. He had planned the settlement of the Italian Question on lines which would satisfy the legitimate ambitions of the Sardinian monarchy in the north, while maintaining the *status quo* in central and southern Italy. He had never contemplated the political unity of the whole Peninsula—a development fraught with menace to his own military power and involving the grave risk of a collision with the French Clericals, who would be infuriated at the threatened extinction of the papal dominion. Yet in the direction of a United Italy, as risings in Tuscany and the States of the Church showed, the current was flowing with irresistible force.

1859  
—

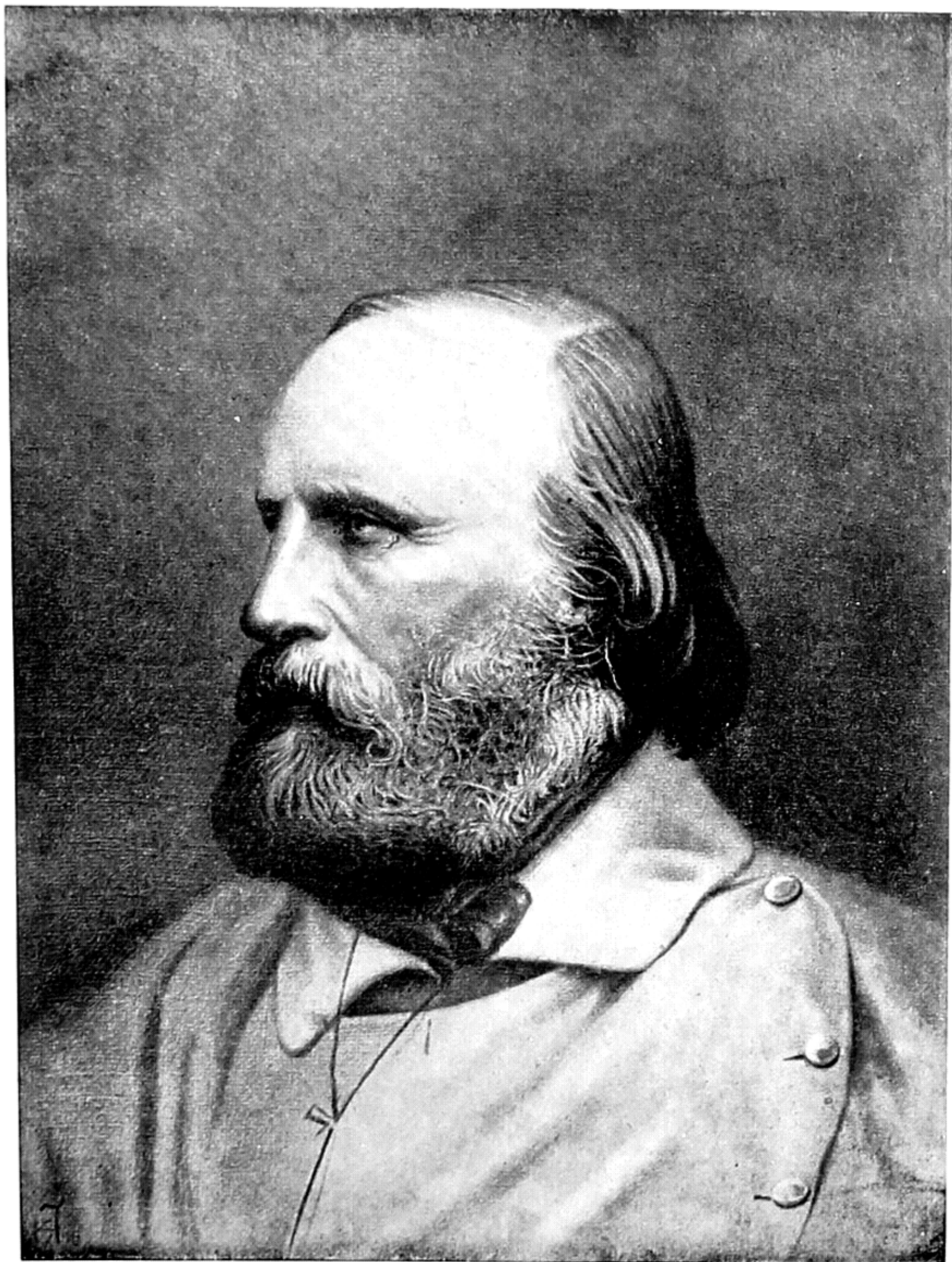
Cavour resigned office and his work seemed hopelessly compromised. But at this crisis in their fate the Italian people took their destiny into their own hands, recognizing that a nation must learn to lean upon itself. French assistance had been invaluable, but the completion of the task which others had begun could only be accomplished by the Italians themselves. Central Italy boldly refused to accept the decision that the rulers of Parma, Tuscany, Modena and the Romagna—who had been expelled during the Austrian debacle—should be restored. In the hour of darkness its indomitable resolution opened up a new vista. Out of compunction, perhaps, for his equivocal policy in the war, Napoleon would allow no coercion on the part of Austria, and accepted England's proposal for a plebiscite. An overwhelming vote declared in favour of union with the Sardinian monarchy, but as the price of their annexation the Emperor

*The  
plebiscites.*

1860 — extorted the surrender of Savoy and Nice. His reluctance to permit the incorporation of the Central States with Piedmont had only been overcome with difficulty, as he realized the impossibility of checking any longer forces which he himself had set in motion. The acquisition of Italian territory was intended to reconcile French public opinion, but it completed the alienation of Italy, and it obscured the great services which Napoleon, despite his tortuous policy, had rendered to the Italian cause.

*Garibaldi.* The eyes of the Italian world were now fixed upon Sicily, where an astonishing panorama was unfolding itself before their gaze. In some respects the 'Garibaldian epic' was the most striking, as it certainly was the most dramatic, episode of the Italian movement. After tasting to the full the bitter waters of diplomacy, Italy witnessed a succession of heroic achievements which recalled the age of mediæval romances rather than one of sober historical facts. The effete Bourbon monarchy had long been tottering to its fall, and its final dissolution was brought about by the Sicilian Revolution. The movement was organized by the followers of Mazzini, but a new direction was given to its course when Garibaldi, an adherent of the Savoy dynasty, assumed the leadership. At the head of his 'Thousand' he landed at Marsala on May 11, 1860, and from that day onwards his march was one triumphal progress. Within a month the 'red-shirts' had forced the retirement of the Neapolitan garrison, over 20,000 in number, from the island; they then crossed the Straits of Messina, and on September 7 took up their headquarters at Naples, which the Bourbon King had already evacuated. Meanwhile Cavour, who had returned to power, watched Garibaldi's precipitate advance not without embarrassment. He recognized the danger that the Mazzinians, whose influence was not propitious for the fortunes of the Sardinian monarchy, might gain the upper hand among the population of the south. Even more imminent was the danger of an international crisis, which could hardly be averted if Garibaldi fulfilled his intention of marching on Rome in order to make her the capital of Italy. Garibaldi did not trouble his head about diplomatic compli-





GIUSEPPE GARIBALDI (1807-1882)

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*By the courtesy of Messrs. Hutchinson & Co.*



cations, and cared little whether an attack on the French garrison in Rome provoked France into a declaration of war. But Cavour, who knew that the enemies of Italy were only waiting for an opportunity to swoop down upon her at the first false move, could not view the prospect of a European conflagration so lightly. His skill saved a perilous situation; to forestall Garibaldi, he despatched an army into the Papal States. He had no difficulty in finding the necessary pretext to cover his action. From Ireland, Belgium and France the Papal Court had summoned a multitude of volunteers to check by force of arms the deluge which was threatening to sweep away the last remnants of its temporal power. A great campaign was inaugurated which had for its immediate object the protection of the patrimony of St. Peter, while it also foreshadowed the rehabilitation of the principle of 'Legitimacy.' Yet any reversion to 'Legitimist' pretensions—in other words, the restoration of exiled rulers—would have been fatal to the existing order in Italy and France alike; it was, therefore, to the interest of both Cavour and Napoleon to stop the progress of the movement before Austria was drawn into it. Accordingly, the Italian Government called upon the Roman Curia to disband its foreign troops, and upon its refusal declared war. Within two weeks all was over; the papal forces were routed at Castelfidardo, and the States of the Church passed out of the possession of the Pope. The victory was a personal triumph for Cavour; he had emerged successfully from a critical ordeal, and his hands were enormously strengthened for coping with the situation in Naples. It was true that in baulking the plans of Garibaldi he had intensified the dislike and suspicion with which the soldier regarded the statesman, but he was well aware that Garibaldi needed his assistance to reduce the Neapolitan fortresses; moreover the Italian Parliament supported the minister. The time was therefore ripe for Victor Emmanuel to cross the Neapolitan frontier; and, at his meeting with Garibaldi, the latter surrendered his authority into the hands of the King of Italy. This act of renunciation, accompanied by a refusal to accept the honours pressed upon him,



1860-70 — was a fitting end to the heroic achievements of the great Italian hero.

*Italy of the  
Italians.*

The political unity of Italy was now almost achieved. Plebiscites were held in Naples and Sicily, and in both cases a decisive vote was cast in favour of annexation ; a little later they were supplemented by similar votes in the States of the Church (Umbria and the Marches). Rome and Venice alone were needed as the coping stone of the edifice. Venice was acquired in 1866, when the outbreak of the Austro-Prussian War furnished Italy with an opportunity to strike a blow at her traditional enemy. Rome came into Italian possession in 1870, when the Franco-Prussian War compelled the retirement of the French garrison. This completion of his life-work Cavour did not live to see, for he died in June 1861. But he lived long enough to create the *Italy of the Italians*, and to earn the undying gratitude of the Italian people.







## CHAPTER VI

### THE BALKAN STATES

THE rise of the Balkan States is the history of the decline of the Ottoman Empire. This decline has been very gradual. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Turkey owed her survival, not to her own inherent strength, but to the weaknesses and jealousies of her neighbours. She found her salvation in the rivalry of Austria and Russia on the Lower Danube, and in the Mediterranean interests of Great Britain. The 'Sick Man of Europe' clung tenaciously to life, and the prognostications of his speedy dissolution were doomed to disappointment. It is, of course, obvious that recent developments have brought new factors into play, and have given an entirely different aspect to the whole Eastern Question. But any serious attempt to unravel the tangled web of Balkan diplomacy in the nineteenth century must deal with the problem from the standpoint of the nineteenth, not of the twentieth century.

The Eastern Question has always been an international Question. In one form or another it has furnished the background of European politics for twelve centuries. As early as the eighth century Europe was almost submerged by a wave of Mohammedan conquest; and, though the tide rolled back, its menace was always present. A thousand years later the Eastern Question was still acute, but its character had fundamentally changed. European statesmen no longer feared the expansion of the Ottoman Empire; what they now dreaded was its disruption. Austria abandoned her historic rôle as the bulwark of Europe against Turkey, in order to become the bulwark of Turkey against Russia.

1815

*Decline of  
the Otto-  
man  
Empire.*

*Phases of  
the Eastern  
Question.*

1815

*Internal  
condition  
of Turkey.*

The trend of Russia southwards to the shores of the Bosphorus, the traditional policy of expansion inaugurated by Peter the Great and culminating under Catharine, converted Austria into a rival and an enemy. In the eyes of Austria, Russian ascendancy in the Balkans foreshadowed a great Slav Empire, which would one day absorb all the Slavs of South-Eastern Europe. Hence the integrity of the Habsburg monarchy seemed bound up with the integrity of the Turkish dominions. Great Britain also believed that the continued existence of Turkey in Europe as a barrier against Russia was necessary to safeguard her empire in India and her position in the Mediterranean. She had already intervened in 1790 to prevent the partition of Ottoman territory by Joseph II. and Catharine the Great; and she intervened a second time in the Crimean War when the dissolution of Turkey again appeared imminent. Yet while the European Powers successfully warded off the perils which threatened Turkey from without, they could not prevent the foundations of the Ottoman Empire being slowly undermined by internal weaknesses. In the main the sources of these weaknesses were twofold. One was the ambition of the pashas, or provincial governors, who were practically free from control and independent in all but name. A degenerate line of sultans held nominal sway, but as a rule they were deficient in resolution and capacity; and their incompetence served to accelerate the process of decay. Two powerful pashas in the early years of the nineteenth century were Ali of Janina and Mehemet Ali, the former building up a great power in Albania, the latter in Egypt. But the fundamental causes of the gradual shrinkage of the Ottoman Empire were racial and religious. Built up by the sword, Turkish dominion was maintained only by the sword. No ties of common sentiment or common religion knit together conquerors and conquered, and the Turks always remained isolated in the midst of a subjected population. An impenetrable barrier rigidly divided the faithful and the unbeliever, the Mussulmans and the Orthodox, mutual hatred fanning the flames of religious discord and racial antipathy. As the spirit of revolt spread among the Balkan races, the

Eastern Question passed out of the control of diplomatists, and the despised peasant of the Balkans asserted his manhood before the eyes of the whole world.

1815

The Greeks were the first to achieve their emancipation. Two circumstances fostered the longing for independence, which had found expression in a rising in the Morea as early as 1774. In the first place, the Turks usually displayed great moderation in their treatment of the Greek population. "In their village communities, which the Turks had suffered to survive, the Greeks had the elements of the vigorous local life which suited their genius; in the Orthodox Church they possessed the organization necessary to bind them together in the sense of a common nationality. Long before the outbreak of the insurrection the wealthy island communities of the Ægean and the Adriatic, though nominally forming part of the Ottoman Empire, had enjoyed a practical independence, tempered only by the obligation to send to Constantinople an annual tribute in money and in sailors to man the imperial navy. Their armed trading-brigs . . . were destined to play a decisive part in the struggle for independence. In the Morea and on the mainland there was indeed no such practical autonomy as in the islands; but here too the weakness of the administration had suffered a spirit of independence to grow up which asserted itself in the only way open to it—brigandage."<sup>1</sup> It is only fair to remember also that the tolerance of the Turks set an example to Europe which was sorely needed. The Christian was allowed "a greater measure of liberty than that enjoyed by dissidents in any other country in Europe. Catholics in Ireland and Protestants in Austria might envy him his privileges. He was free to exercise his religion, to educate himself as he pleased, to accumulate wealth; however humble his origin, in a system which accounted nothing of birth, he could hold high office in the Government." The importance of the Greek Church, both in keeping alive the spirit of hostility to the followers of Mahomet and in providing the framework of an organized resistance, can scarcely

*The condition of the Greeks.*

<sup>1</sup> W. A. Phillips, "Greece," in *Camb. Mod. Hist.* x. 170, 172. Phillips, *The War of Greek Independence* (1897), chap. i.



1821 — be over-estimated. Thus the Turks themselves by their tolerance made possible the national movement which was to lead to the dissolution of their power in Greece. In the second place, the revived study of Greek classics brought home to the modern Greeks the great traditions of which circumstances had made them the depositaries. As in Hungary, so in Greece, a linguistic and literary revival associated with the name of Korais heralded a national uprising. On the other hand, the driving force behind the Greek revolution was not Hellenism, but the Orthodox religion; and the traditions of Hellenism were chiefly potent in their appeal to the sympathies of those whose minds were stored with classical culture. An English poet, who shared in the Greek insurrection, voiced the sentiments of his countrymen when he wrote :

“ The isles of Greece ! The isles of Greece !  
 Where burning Sappho loved and sung—  
 Where grew the arts of war and peace,  
 Where Delos rose and Phœbus sprung !  
 Eternal summer gilds them yet—  
 But all, except their sun, is set. . . .

“ The mountains look on Marathon,  
 And Marathon looks on the sea ;  
 And musing there an hour alone,  
 I dreamed that Greece might still be free ;  
 For, standing on the Persian's grave,  
 I could not deem myself a slave.”

*The Greek  
insurrec-  
tion.*

The first rising of the Greeks broke out in 1821 in the North. The leader was Prince Alexander Ypsilanti, who seized the opportunity afforded by the war between the Sultan and Ali of Janina to set up the standard of revolt in the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. He relied upon the support of Russia, but the Emperor Alexander was now under the influence of Metternich, who persuaded him not to lend assistance. The movement was easily suppressed, and Ypsilanti fled into Austria. Meanwhile, another insurrection was gaining ground in the Morea,

whence it rapidly developed into a War of Independence. 1821-24  
 It differed from the revolt in the North because it was the  
 work of an organized body, the *Hetairia Philike*, a wide-  
 spread secret society, which—like the *Carbonari* of southern  
 Italy—kept alive the sparks of patriotism. It was also a  
 national movement—the uprising of a nation; whereas  
 the rebellion of Ypsilanti met with no response from the  
 Roumanian peasants of Moldavia and Wallachia, who had  
 endured great oppression at the hands of their Greek masters.  
 But while the soil had been prepared for a Greek revolution  
 by the propaganda of the Hetairists, the insurrection in  
 the Morea was spontaneous and unorganized. A series of  
 sporadic outbreaks culminated in a general massacre of the  
 entire Mussulman population, and the torch of revolt was  
 then carried northwards beyond the Isthmus of Corinth,  
 until the whole of Greece—including Thessaly and Mace-  
 donia—was caught up in a general conflagration. Un-  
 happily, however, the Greeks sullied the cause of freedom  
 by barbarous atrocities, and the War of Independence  
 degenerated from the outset into a war of extermination.

The struggle was protracted over a period of eight years (1821-1829), though the final decision was not reached till 1831. At first the Turks were heavily handicapped by the fact that they were fighting on two fronts. For many months their best troops were held up before the island fortress of Janina, where Ali maintained a stout resistance in the face of overwhelming forces. Moreover the Greeks had command of the sea owing to their superior seamanship, and this was a factor of enormous importance. "The Greeks," said Wellington, "have the superiority at sea; and those who have this superiority must be successful." But in 1824 came the turn of the wheel of fortune, and the Turks now began to gain the upper hand. The Porte summoned to its aid Mehemet Ali, the Pasha of Egypt, who was promised the pashaliks of Morea, Syria and Damascus as the price of his assistance against the Greek insurgents. It was the policy of the Sultan Mahmud to weaken the 'over-mighty subject,' but he was compelled by force of circumstances to undermine his own position by lavish

*Interven-  
tion of  
Mehermet  
Ali.*

1821-22 — promises of future rewards. "A drowning man clings to a serpent," and at the moment the help of Mehemet Ali was indispensable if the authority of the Sultan was to be restored in his Greek dominions. The intervention of the Pasha of Egypt at once made itself felt. He possessed an army and fleet organized by French officers and engineers according to Western ideas, and by sea and by land their superiority was speedily asserted. The situation of the Greeks now became extremely critical. It was abundantly clear that they were powerless to save themselves by their own exertions; and the volunteers, like Byron, who flocked to their standard, were too few to prevail against the disciplined forces pitted against them. Nothing short of a European intervention could avert the utter collapse of the Greek revolution, but the obstacles in the way of concerted action revealed the fundamental difficulties inherent in the Eastern Question.

*Attitude of  
Europe.*

At the first news of the Greek revolt Metternich exclaimed: "This affair must be looked upon as placed beyond the pale of civilization."<sup>1</sup> In the eyes of the Austrian statesman the Greeks were rebels against the lawful sovereignty of the Ottoman Government, and the principle of 'Legitimacy' was invoked to serve as a plea for non-intervention. With this view the Tsar of Russia was easily brought to concur. "The Emperor Alexander," Metternich proudly boasted, "has taken root in my school." Moreover, Alexander was averse from war. "I have no ambition," he is reported to have said, "my Empire is already too big for me—I am not blood-thirsty, every one knows it—and this war would not be to Russia's interest." On her side England adhered strictly to the theory of non-intervention. Castlereagh, and still more Canning, believed that it was the bounden duty of Great Britain to hold aloof from the internal concerns of other States, except where she was entitled to intervene in virtue of treaty-obligations. At the same time England and Austria, as we have already seen, regarded the integrity of the Turkish Empire in the light of a political axiom. They were shrewd enough to recognize

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs*, iii. 525.



that the success of the Greek insurrection would be the beginning of the end, and they not unnaturally dreaded the international complications which would ensue once Turkey were to disappear from the map of Europe. Hence they bent all their energies to isolating the Greek revolt and preventing it from developing into a European conflagration. For a time this policy was successfully pursued. Public opinion, carried away by memories of 'the glory that was Greece,' was overwhelmingly in favour of a race which bore the name, even if it only partially inherited the blood, of the classical Greeks. It was not strong enough, however, to divert the Governments of Europe from the course which counsels of expediency and prudence alike seemed to dictate.

This was the situation during the early years of the struggle. Yet even at this stage it became increasingly difficult for the European Powers to refrain from interference. Russia, in particular, showed signs of restlessness. The Tsar, whatever his personal views, could not forget that he was the champion of the Orthodox Church, and therefore had a peculiar interest in a war which bore the character of an Orthodox crusade against the infidel. Moreover it was the traditional policy of Russia to advance southwards, and it seemed folly to let slip an opportunity which offered such inviting prospects. At the same time the actions of the Porte itself gave Russia a pretext for intervention. The Patriarch of Constantinople, the spiritual head of the Orthodox Church, was made to expiate with his blood the butchery of Mussulmans in the Morea. This crime was as inexcusable as those it was intended to avenge, and it provoked a great outburst of indignation among the Russian people. Other grievances were not lacking ; in defiance of treaty-obligations Turkey retained her hold upon the Danubian Principalities, and she also seized Greek ships flying the Russian flag. This led to a rupture of diplomatic relations between Russia and Turkey, and the outbreak of war now seemed unavoidable. Both England and Austria, however, were anxious to avert hostilities, and urged the Sultan, who felt his dignity gravely compromised, to make concessions. The result was to preserve peace for the

1821-22

—

*Position of  
Russia.*

1822-23 — moment, until the situation was profoundly modified by two important events.

Canning's  
policy  
towards  
Greece.

The first of these events was the appointment of George Canning as Foreign Secretary (1822). The keynote of Canning's policy was expressed in the maxim: "Every nation for itself, and God for us all!" While he privately shared the pro-Hellenic sympathies of his countrymen, his public attitude towards the Eastern Question was shaped purely by national considerations. "You know my politics well enough," he wrote, "to know what I mean when I say that for *Europe* I shall be desirous now and then to read *England*."<sup>1</sup> He explained his meaning in these terms: "Intimately connected as we are with the system of Europe, it does not follow that we are therefore called upon to mix ourselves on every occasion, with a restless and meddling activity, in the concerns of the nations which surround us." He supported whole-heartedly the doctrine of non-intervention. "Our object in common with our allies," he said, "has been to maintain peace, aware that a new war, in whatever quarter it might be kindled, might presently involve all Europe in its flames"; while in the event of a war in the East, "*no human foresight could anticipate the issue*." On this ground he withheld assistance from the Greeks, though he counselled the Porte to conciliate Russia by removing her grievances, and to treat the insurgents with greater moderation. But the rapid march of events soon forced Canning to realize that something more than a policy of Olympian detachment was needed to safeguard the interests of Great Britain; and on March 25, 1823, he recognized the Greeks as belligerents. "The recognition of the belligerent character of the Greeks," Canning explained, "was necessitated by the impossibility of treating as pirates a population of a million souls, and of bringing within the bounds of civilized war a contest which had been marked at the outset, on both sides, by disgusting barbarities."<sup>2</sup> It was impossible to call to account the Turkish Government, which had no control, for acts of piracy committed by the Greeks who

<sup>1</sup> Stapleton, *Canning and his Times*, 364-365.

<sup>2</sup> W. A. Phillips, *History of Europe*, 143.

were in command of the sea ; the only alternative was to recognize the Greek provisional Government and hold it responsible for the actions of its fleet. This step on the part of England reacted profoundly on the whole international situation, and awakened lively apprehensions at the Courts of Vienna and Petrograd. They could no longer profess to treat the Greeks as rebels, "beyond the pale of civilization," now that Great Britain had entered into formal relations with them. They could no longer leave the Greek War of Independence to take its own course, indifferent whether the Greeks massacred the Turks or the Turks butchered the Greeks. Sooner or later they were bound to intervene, for the recognition of the Greeks as belligerents was interpreted as a sign that England was seeking to oust Austria and Russia from the credit of intervention. But while the necessity for concerted intervention was now reluctantly admitted, there was no agreement as to the character of the intervention. It was clearly out of question to assist the Turks ; yet if they helped the Greeks they would set the seal of approval upon a revolutionary movement and undermine the whole fabric of 'Legitimacy.' Russia proposed the establishment of three semi-independent principalities, enjoying autonomy, but under Turkish suzerainty. Metternich objected to the scheme on the ground that the new Greek States would inevitably gravitate towards Russia, looking to the Muscovite State for protection against Ottoman encroachment. He therefore advanced the alternative proposal that Greece should be made a sovereign State. This in its turn was equally unacceptable to Russia, which recognized the danger that Greece might pursue an independent course and shake herself free from Russian tutelage. A deadlock was thus reached, in the midst of which the Emperor Alexander died (1825).

As the accession of George Canning to office gave a new turn to English policy, so a change in Russian policy was produced by the accession of Nicholas I. to the throne of the Romanoffs. Alexander I. had subordinated the traditional policy of Russia to what he conceived to be the

1823-25

*Change in  
Russian  
policy.*



1826-28 — interests of Europe. Enamoured of the idea of a European Concert,<sup>1</sup> he was easily persuaded by Metternich not to act independently in the affairs of Turkey. His successor reverted to the policy of Peter the Great and Catharine; and Canning, alarmed lest Russia should declare war on the Porte on her own account, proposed the joint intervention of the two Powers. According to the 'Protocol of Petrograd' (1826), Greece was to be erected into a vassal State, and this suggestion was laid before the Ottoman Government. England thus abandoned her policy of non-intervention in order to forestall isolated intervention on the part of Russia. The Porte rejected the Protocol, and Canning was driven to employ force as the only way to prevent the defection of Russia from the principles embodied in the Protocol. The Protocol of Petrograd was therefore converted into the Treaty of London (1827), by which Great Britain, France and Russia undertook to establish Greece as an autonomous State under Turkish suzerainty, and to take the necessary steps to compel the Porte to acquiesce in this settlement.

*The independence of Greece.*

Austria and Prussia would not agree to the coercion of Turkey in favour of rebellious subjects, and refused their assent to the treaty. Metternich proffered his mediation at Constantinople, when matters were brought to a crisis by the battle of Navarino (October 20, 1827). The fleets of England and France, while attempting to enforce an armistice between the Turks and the Greeks—in accordance with the instructions of the home Governments—came to blows with the fleet of Mehemet Ali and destroyed it. The results of Navarino were momentous. The Sultan proclaimed a Holy War against the Christian Powers, and in particular repudiated the treaty into which he had recently entered with Russia (Treaty of Akkerman, 1826) respecting the Danubian Principalities and the navigation of the Straits. This afforded Russia a pretext for intervention in Turkey, against which it was now impossible for the Western Powers to raise any effective protest. Meanwhile, however, Wellington had become Prime Minister (1828).

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter VII.

He was inflexibly opposed to coercive measures against the Porte, clinging to the hope that the Ottoman Empire might still be preserved intact as a barrier against Russian ambitions in the Mediterranean. Russia therefore took action alone, and war was declared on Turkey (1828). But the outbreak of war forced Wellington's hands; if England stood aside from the struggle she would have no voice in the final settlement, or at any rate Greece, liberated by the arms of Russia, would become a dependency of Russia. Accordingly, he fell in with the suggestion of the French Government to despatch an expeditionary force to the Morea to drive out the army of Mehemet Ali. Before the arrival of the French, Codrington, the English admiral, had already secured the evacuation of the Morea by making a naval demonstration before Alexandria. The war was brought to an end by the bold strategy of the Russian commander, Diebitsch, who with barely 13,000 troops pressed on to Constantinople and extorted from the Turks the Treaty of Adrianople (1829). The Danubian Principalities, while remaining nominally under Ottoman suzerainty, became to all intents and purposes the appanage of the Russian Empire, and the rights of the Russian flag in the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles were reasserted. The Greek Question was settled by the Powers. Russia would have been content with the erection of Greece into a vassal State, autonomous but tributary. This solution was not acceptable to the British Government, which shared the conviction of Austria that the creation of a tributary State would open the door to Russian intrigues in the Balkans and furnish the pretext for perpetual interference in the affairs of Turkey. Hence Wellington and Metternich, who had both strenuously upheld the preservation of the Ottoman Empire, were compelled by the force of circumstances to recognize Greece as a sovereign and independent State. The new State was placed under the protection of the three Powers—Great Britain, Russia, and France—to whose joint efforts the Greek nation owed its resurrection; and the crown was offered to Otho, second son of King Louis of Bavaria, who assumed the reins of government

1828-31

—

1833-1914 in the opening months of 1833. In this way the first serious breach was made in the integrity of the Ottoman Empire ; and a precedent was established which cleared the ground for the rise of a group of Balkan States, whose relations with each other and with the Great Powers have completely revolutionized the whole political situation in the Near East.<sup>1</sup>

*Roumania.* Among the Balkan States the most considerable in size in the year 1914 was Roumania, whose population then numbered seven million people. In addition there were three and a half million Roumanians in Hungary, and nearly one and a half millions in Bessarabia, a province of Russia. These constituted *Romania Irredenta*, the 'unredeemed' part of the Roumanian race still under alien rule. The significance of these figures will be readily grasped when it is borne in mind that the Magyars only numbered eight to nine millions, the Southern Slavs (Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) eleven millions, the Czechs and Slovaks about nine millions, the Bulgarians five to six millions, the Greeks less than seven millions, and the Albanians about one million. The trade of Roumania was almost as great as the combined trade of Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria and Greece ; and her army came next to those of the six Great Powers. Roumania has been called 'the Belgium of the East,' and the epithet bore testimony to her striking progress.<sup>2</sup>

*Early history.* The Roumanian State is comparatively a recent creation, but the history of the Roumanian people goes back over sixteen hundred years. In the second century A.D. Trajan settled Roman colonies on the Lower Danube (in

<sup>1</sup> Otho's reign lasted thirty years. The chief events were : (1) The Revolution of 1843, when the King was forced to grant a Constitution and dismiss his Bavarian advisers ; and (2) the occupation of the Piræus by English and French troops during the Crimean War to prevent Greece making war on Turkey. Otho's unpopularity and lack of an heir led to his deposition in 1862. His successor was George I., second son of Christian IX. of Denmark, at whose accession the British Government ceded the Ionian Islands to Greece. \ After the Russo-Turkish War (*infra*, p. 208) Greece obtained Thessaly and part of Epirus (Arta). \ In 1897 disturbances in Crete provoked the Greco-Turkish War, in which Greece was defeated, and the intervention of the Powers alone saved her from loss of territory.

<sup>2</sup> R. W. Seton-Watson, *Roumania and the Great War* (1915), 2, 5, 6.



1856  
—

Dacia), which subsequently served as an outpost of the Empire against the assaults of barbarians from the North. Then comes a break in their history of a thousand years, after which they reappear once more in the thirteenth century, when they were now divided into two Principalities—Moldavia and Wallachia. At a later period these Principalities became part of the Ottoman Empire, but they continued to be governed by their own rulers. When Russia began to advance southwards against Turkey in the eighteenth century, the geographical situation of the two provinces condemned them to play the part of a shuttlecock between the Muscovite State on the one side and the Ottoman State on the other. The boundary between Russia and Turkey was the River Pruth, which also formed the northern frontier of Moldavia; hence, whenever Russia was at war with the Turks, her first step was always to occupy Moldavia and Wallachia. As a result of the famous treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardji (1774), Russia acquired the right of intervention in the Principalities, and in 1812 (Treaty of Bucharest) she received the eastern portion of Moldavia known as Bessarabia. Under the Treaty of Adrianople, as already mentioned,<sup>1</sup> the Principalities became protectorates of the Russian Empire. This was practically equivalent to annexation, and Russian influence was now in the ascendant. The position, in fact, was analogous to that in Poland before the final partition, when Russia was in virtual possession of the country; accordingly it speedily awakened the apprehensions of Austria. The Principalities command the banks of the Danube, and their acquisition would have enabled Russia to control the navigation of the most important river in Europe. Hence, at the Congress of Paris (1856),<sup>2</sup> Moldavia and Wallachia were converted into autonomous States under Ottoman suzerainty, and Russia was compelled to restore Bessarabia.

The next stage in the history of Roumania was the union of the two Principalities. A movement in favour of a single national State had been steadily growing, and it found a powerful, if not disinterested, advocate in the French

*Union of  
the Princi-  
palities.*

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> *Supra*, p. 38.

1856-66 — Emperor. Napoleon III. rendered greater services to the cause of nationality than is usually recognized, and Roumania at any rate owes her national existence to the exertions of a French ruler. The Treaty of Paris, which brought the Crimean War to an end, provided that a constituent assembly should be elected in each of the Principalities to lay before a European Commission its views upon the question of union. The elections were improperly conducted, Turkey and Austria bringing pressure to bear upon the inhabitants and even resorting to intimidation. Napoleon annulled the elections and took steps to secure a free expression of opinion. The constituent assemblies declared in favour of a united State, but the scheme was wrecked by the opposition of England and Austria. The former supported the authority of the Ottoman Government from fear of Russia, while the latter recognized the dangerous attraction which a national Roumanian State would have for her own Roumanian subjects in Transylvania. It was settled, therefore, that each Principality should elect its own prince and legislative assembly (1858). The Roumanians thereupon proceeded to nominate the same Prince (Alexander Couza) both in Moldavia and Wallachia, thus outwitting the Powers who had overlooked the possibility that the Principalities might hit upon the same choice. Austria, now on the brink of the Italian war,<sup>1</sup> was unable to interfere, and the two provinces became united under one ruler. In 1861 the Porte also agreed to the union of the two legislatures; and in a proclamation to his people the Prince could announce to the world that 'The Roumanian nation is founded.'

*Prince  
Couza  
(1859-  
1866).*

Prince Couza's tenure of power lasted only seven years (1859-1866). It was a period of internal reforms. Ecclesiastical property was sequestrated; two Roumanian Universities were founded; and the peasants were relieved from their more onerous feudal obligations. These measures excited the hostility of the Church and the landowners, and brought about Couza's compulsory abdication. His successor was Prince Charles of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, whom Bismarck had counselled to accept the proffered

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 178.

dignity. "Accept," he said; "it will at any rate be an agreeable souvenir for your old age." His reign covered nearly half a century (1866-1914), and during this long period Roumania became the chief military State in South-Eastern Europe. (The efficiency of the Roumanian army was first revealed to the world in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877, when the Roumanians captured the famous Grivitsa redoubt, the strongest of all the fortifications of Plevna. Russia rewarded the services of her Roumanian ally by wresting from her Bessarabia, which had been restored to Moldavia after the Crimean War. This ingratitude estranged the Roumanian people who deeply resented their separation from their kinsfolk across the River Pruth, the "accursed stream" as it was called. One other result of the war was the formal recognition of Roumanian independence; and, in token of her new status, Roumania in 1881 was erected into a kingdom.)

1866-  
1914  
—  
Prince  
Charles  
(1866-  
1914).

Roumania enjoyed one inestimable advantage over her neighbours in the Balkans. "For a whole generation, while Serbia was the scene of repeated *coups d'état* and political scandals, while in Bulgaria, despite wonderful progress, the representative idea has always been ruthlessly subordinated to the will of the sovereign, while Turkey groaned under the Hamidian despotism and Greece still waited for the statesman<sup>1</sup> who was to free her from the ban of political anarchism, Roumania, alone of all the Balkan States, could boast of an uninterrupted constitutional development."<sup>2</sup> In two important respects, however, Roumania down to 1914 was behind her neighbours. The agrarian problem was extremely acute. The feudal system, which had disappeared elsewhere in the Balkans, continued to survive in Roumania, and ownership of land was mainly vested not in the peasants but in the *boyards* or nobles. The agrarian unrest was a serious menace to the stability of the Roumanian State, and even as recently as 1907 the disaffection of the peasants provoked a formidable insurrection. Another grave defect in the Roumanian State was the persecution of its Jewish subjects, who were debarred

Merits and  
defects  
of the  
Rou-  
manian  
State.

<sup>1</sup> Venizelos.

<sup>2</sup> Seton-Watson, *op. cit.* 22.



1878 — from the exercise of all civil and political rights. The Congress of Berlin (1878) made the removal of religious disabilities a condition of Roumanian independence, complete religious equality being the primary obligation imposed on every civilized community. In gross violation of this international guarantee the Jewish people were rigidly excluded from the privileges of citizenship, though not from its burdens, from the ownership of land, and from certain trades. It was, "moreover, peculiarly galling," observed Dr. Seton-Watson, "that the Jews, though regarded as aliens and denied political rights, should be liable to military service—an arrangement which conflicts with all democratic and constitutional tradition and indeed with the most elementary ideas of give and take."<sup>1</sup>

Early  
history of  
Bulgaria.

The origin of the Bulgarian people is wrapped in obscurity. In very early times the country was inhabited by Thracian and Illyrian tribes, who were brought under the sway of Philip of Macedon and Alexander the Great, and were afterwards subdued by the Romans. These Thracians and Illyrians were eventually displaced by the Slavs, the date of whose incursion into the plains of Bulgaria is unknown. In the seventh century the Slavs in their turn were conquered by a race of Bulgarians (*Bulgari*), who entered the country at this period. The two races slowly amalgamated, the former perpetuating their speech, the latter perpetuating their name. Thus the modern Bulgarians are descended in the main from two different stocks, the Slavs and the old Bulgarians. At two periods in the Middle Ages Bulgaria emerged as the greatest State in the Balkans. In the reign of Simeon (893–927), who adopted the title of Tsar, she "assumed a rank," as Gibbon wrote, "among the civilized Powers of the earth."<sup>2</sup> His empire extended over Bulgaria proper, modern Serbia, and the greater part of Albania, but his successors were powerless to wield the sceptre he had bequeathed them. In 1018 the

<sup>1</sup> Seton-Watson, *op. cit.* 25.

<sup>2</sup> E. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (ed. J. B. Bury, 1912), vi. 140.

1876  
—

Greek Emperor subjugated the whole Balkan Peninsula, and for over a century and a half the Bulgarians remained under the Byzantine yoke. They recovered their independence in 1186, and under John Asên II. (1218–1241) Bulgaria again attained the position of a great military State, embracing not only Bulgaria herself, but Macedonia, Albania and part of Serbia. "All lands have I conquered," was Asên's proud boast in an inscription preserved in the church of the Forty Martyrs at Trnovo, the ancient capital of Bulgaria, "from Adrianople to Durazzo, the Greek, the Albanian, and the Serbian land. Only the towns round Constantinople and that city itself did the Franks hold; but these too bowed themselves beneath the hand of my sovereignty, for they had no other Tsar but me."<sup>1</sup> The second Bulgarian Empire survived from 1186 to 1398, though its power was destroyed in 1330 by Serbia at the battle of Velbužd (Köstendil). The memory of this exploit is still fresh. Upon the outbreak of war between Serbia and Bulgaria in 1885 the Serbian army marched through Belgrade with the name on their lips of the mediæval Serbian King, Dušan, who had taken the title of 'Tsar of the Bulgarians.'<sup>2</sup> In the feuds of the Balkan peoples the Turks found their best ally, and towards the end of the fourteenth century Bulgaria and Serbia alike collapsed before the Ottoman invaders.

(For nearly five centuries Bulgaria remained an integral part of the Ottoman Empire. The Bulgarian peasant lost his warlike character without developing political instincts, and sunk in apathy he passively accepted the supremacy of his Turkish masters.) On the eve of his liberation from bondage, a material improvement in his economic condition was effected by the reforms of Midhat Pasha, the most enlightened of Turkish statesmen. (The Russian officers, who passed through Bulgaria in 1877, discovered "that the 'little brothers,' whom they had come to free, were better off under the Turkish yoke than many of their own *mujiks* [peasants] under the benevolent despotism of the Tsar. In the words of an impartial eye-witness, to exchange places

*The  
'Bulgarian  
Atrocities.'*

<sup>1</sup> W. Miller, *The Balkans* (1896), 176.

<sup>2</sup> See *infra*, p. 204.

1870-78 — with the Bulgarian *râyah* ' would have been no bad bargain for the Russian peasants.' " <sup>1</sup> Moreover, in 1870, the Bulgarians obtained from the Porte the concession of an independent National Church, the Bulgarian Exarchate—a concession which relieved them from the tyranny of the Greek ecclesiastical system. The Bulgarians were therefore not ill-disposed towards the Turks, and the efforts of a revolutionary committee established at Bucharest to arouse the patriotism of their countrymen met with little response. In 1875, however, an event occurred which changed, as in a flash, the entire political situation in South-Eastern Europe. An insurrection broke out in the Herzegovina,<sup>2</sup> and it awakened revolutionary echoes throughout the whole Balkan Peninsula. Bulgaria did not escape the universal unrest, and a rising took place at Tatar-Bazardjik. The revolt was without much significance and was suppressed with ease, but the unspeakable cruelty of the Turkish soldiers covered them with infamy. At Batak, where five thousand inhabitants out of a population of seven thousand were ruthlessly massacred without distinction of age or sex, the butchery was stigmatized by the British Commissioner as " perhaps the most heinous crime that has stained the history of the present century." ' The Bulgarian Atrocities ' (1876) earned the reprobation of the whole civilized world, and the unmeasured denunciations of William Gladstone helped to impress the horror of the outrage upon the conscience of Western Europe.)

*Treaty  
of San  
Stefano.*

Of the war between Russia and Turkey which followed in April 1877, we shall speak presently.<sup>3</sup> Overpowered on every side, Turkish resistance soon collapsed, and (the struggle was brought to an end in March 1878 by the Treaty of San Stefano. This treaty was extremely favourable to the Bulgarians; for the moment it realized the vision of a Greater Bulgaria, the legacy of the heroic age of Bulgaria. It erected Bulgaria into a vassal State extending from the Danube to the Ægean and from the Black Sea to Albania, and comprising North and South Bulgaria (Eastern Roumelia) as well as a considerable part of Mace-

<sup>1</sup> Miller, *op. cit.* 206.

<sup>2</sup> See *infra*, p. 208.

<sup>3</sup> *Infra*, p. 208.



donia. Greece and Serbia, however, vigorously protested against a settlement which ignored their own claims upon Macedonia, and the Great Powers were no less hostile, though on different grounds. England, in particular, viewed with disapproval the proposed aggrandizement of Bulgaria, expecting that the new State would become a Russian province and so pave the way for the ultimate acquisition of Constantinople. Austria had her own grounds for dissatisfaction; she claimed as her share of the spoils the occupation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina. Russia bowed before the storm, and the Treaty of San Stefano was abrogated.) The famous Congress of Berlin met in June 1878, Great Britain being represented by Lord Beaconsfield, the Prime Minister, and Lord Salisbury, the Foreign Secretary. The outcome of its deliberations was (the Treaty of Berlin, which rudely shattered the dreams of a Greater Bulgaria. The new State, now established as an "autonomous and tributary principality under the suzerainty of the Sultan," was only a fragment of the State contemplated by the Treaty of San Stefano.) It was restricted to Bulgaria proper, extending from the Danube to the Balkans and from the Black Sea to the frontiers of Serbia and Macedonia. The land south of the Balkan range, Eastern Roumelia, was erected into an autonomous province "under the direct political and military authority of the Sultan," but administered by "a Christian Governor-General nominated by the Porte, with the assent of the Powers, for a term of five years." The result of this settlement was to divide the Bulgarians from their kinsfolk in Eastern Roumelia and Macedonia, while "the Bulgarian-speaking district of Pirot" was also incorporated with Serbia. (In the nature of things a settlement which openly violated the legitimate claims of Bulgarian nationality had no elements of permanence.) The separation of North and South Bulgaria was no less indefensible on national grounds than the similar attempt to keep apart Moldavia and Wallachia twenty years before. It is a significant commentary on the foresight of diplomatists, and the vaunted arts of diplomatic expediency, that the formation of a united Bulgarian State, only a few

1878

*Congress of  
Berlin  
(1878).*

1878-86 — years later, met with the approval of Great Britain, and the disapproval of the Russian Government.

*Union of  
North and  
South  
Bulgaria  
(1885).*

The first Prince of Bulgaria, 'the peasant State,' was Alexander of Battenberg, in whose reign the union of the two Bulgarias was effected as the result of a bloodless revolution at Philippopolis, the capital of Eastern Roumelia. The Turkish Governor was quietly expelled, and Prince Alexander was proclaimed ruler of the principality. Turkey offered no resistance, but the Tsar of Russia, Alexander III., showed his resentment by recalling the Russian officers from Bulgaria. This only had the effect of heightening the Prince's popularity among his subjects, whose gratitude to their Russian 'liberators' was rapidly cooling owing to the tactless and overbearing conduct of Russian agents. More serious at the moment, however, was the opposition raised by the other Balkan States, Greece and Serbia, who were alarmed at the aggrandizement of their rival. Greece was prevented from declaring war by the action of the Powers, which blockaded the Greek coasts, but Serbia had a free hand. The relations between the two countries had steadily deteriorated in consequence of boundary disputes and a tariff war, and public opinion in Serbia was ripe for a conflict. King Milan was also anxious to retrieve his waning prestige, and therefore easily accommodated himself to the national wishes. The Bulgarians, deprived of experienced officers, were taken at a disadvantage, but the national enthusiasm and the inspiring generalship of the Prince overcame all obstacles. The two armies came into collision at Slivnitsa; and, after a fiercely contested battle which continued for three days, the Bulgarians remained masters of the field. Austria barred their advance to the Serbian capital, and the war which had only lasted a fortnight came to an end. The Treaty of Bucharest (March 1886) brought the Bulgarians neither an indemnity nor accession of territory, but the victory of Slivnitsa had achieved its purpose of consolidating the Union.

The military exploits and frank bearing of Prince Alexander endeared him to his unemotional subjects, but Russian intrigues rendered his position untenable. He was person-

ally disliked by his cousin, Alexander III., and his efforts to pursue an independent policy determined his enemies to compass his destruction. After two unsuccessful attempts the Prince was forcibly kidnapped on August 21, 1886, compelled to abdicate the throne, and then conveyed out of the country. The nation, however, rallied to his support and the Prince was recalled from exile; but lacking confidence in his ability to withstand the power of Russia, he voluntarily renounced his position. The strenuous exertions of Russian agents to defer the election of a successor to the vacant throne failed to accomplish their object, but they completed the alienation of the Bulgarian people from their Russian protectors.<sup>1</sup> After an interval of several months a suitable candidate was discovered in the person of Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg, a descendant of King Louis Philippe, who was chosen Prince of Bulgaria in July 1887. The new sovereign was a great contrast to his predecessor; "accident made Prince Ferdinand a sovereign, nature intended him for a student." On the other hand, he was a far abler diplomatist than Prince Alexander, and during the first seven years of his reign (1887-1894) he had the wisdom to entrust the destinies of his adopted country into the hands of Stephen Stambuloff. This remarkable man, the greatest statesman the Balkans had yet known, earned the designation of "the Bulgarian Bismarck." He came into prominence during the revolutionary movements which preceded the emancipation of Bulgaria from Turkish control, and his energetic patriotism had defeated the nefarious conspiracy against Prince Alexander. In his capacity as prime minister he raised the prestige of Bulgaria in the eyes of Europe by his firmness of will and the pursuit of a policy whose single aim was his country's interests. Prince Ferdinand, however, resented the uncourtierlike manners of his great minister, and the relations between them grew embittered. In 1894 he followed the example of the German Emperor<sup>2</sup> and dispensed with Stambuloff's services. The hatred of his enemies pursued the fallen statesman into his

1886-94  
—  
*Abdication  
of  
Alexander  
(1886).*

*Stephen  
Stam-  
buloff.*

<sup>1</sup> W. Miller, *The Ottoman Empire* (1913), 424.

<sup>2</sup> *Infra*, Chapter VIII.



1895 — retirement, and the following year he was brutally murdered. This shameful crime, and still more the equivocal conduct of the Government which delayed the trial of the assassins, disclosed unsavoury glimpses of the intemperate and vindictive character of Balkan domestic politics.

*Early  
history of  
the Serbs.*

The Serbs entered the Balkan Peninsula in the seventh century, and their settlements soon covered the Adriatic coast, extending as far south as Macedonia and embracing also the modern State of Montenegro. Ere long they were drawn into conflict with their Bulgarian neighbours, with whom they were at enmity for more than a thousand years. The fortunes of war inclined now to one side, now to the other. When the first Bulgarian Empire was at its widest extent Serbia suffered complete annihilation.<sup>1</sup> But after the death of Simeon the Serbs recovered their independence, though for a time they passed under the sway of the Byzantine Emperor. The turning-point in the history of Serbia came in the twelfth century. Their misfortunes in earlier times were due in large measure to the defects of their political organization. The Serbian State was a loose federation of tribes ruled by chieftains owning but a nominal obedience to the authority of their prince. Their failure to form an effective union dissipated the strength of the Serbs and retarded for centuries their political development. This weakness was remedied by Stephen Nemanja (1143 or 1159 to 1195), who established his control over the chieftains and founded the Serbian monarchy. At the same time he enlarged his dominions to twice their original size by the acquisition of Dalmatia, Bosnia and other territories. Mediæval Serbia attained her zenith in the reign of Stephen Dušan (1336–1356), the most powerful of all Serbian rulers. He built up a great empire which covered very nearly the whole Balkan Peninsula—extending from the Danube to the Gulf of Corinth, and from the Adriatic to the Ægean, and including Bosnia, the Herzegovina, Macedonia, and the vassal State of Bulgaria herself. Even Constantinople was only saved by the sudden death of Dušan in 1356. The

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 198.

Serbian Empire did not long survive its founder ; it rapidly fell to pieces, and thirty-three years after Dušan's death its power was finally and irrevocably shattered by the Turks at the memorable battle of Kossovo. This battle (1389) sealed the fate of the Balkan States for five centuries. Serbia was allowed to maintain a separate existence for a period of seventy years, though she was now nothing more than a dependent province ; but in 1459 she was at length incorporated as an integral part of the Ottoman State.

1790  
—

The Bulgarians owed their emancipation from Turkish bondage to the swords of a foreign Power, the Serbs to the strength of their own right arm. Even before the nineteenth century the Serbian race, imbued with a passionate love of freedom, struggled to deliver itself from the Ottoman yoke. After the battle of Kossovo, and at subsequent periods, large numbers of Serbian emigrants sought refuge across the Danube and settled in southern Hungary, where they have remained to this day. In their new home they retained their attachment to their native soil and their hatred of its oppressors, and they were a valuable auxiliary to the Hungarian kings in their wars with Turkey. On more than one occasion the liberation of Serbia seemed at hand, more particularly on the eve of the French Revolution. A Serb poet, Obradovich, called upon the Emperor Joseph II. "to protect the Serbian race and turn thy face towards a people dear to thy ancestors, towards unhappy Serbia, which suffers miseries without number. Give us back," he cried, "our ancient heroes, our ancient country !"<sup>1</sup> The Ottoman Empire, which owed its preservation in the nineteenth century to the mutual jealousies of the European Powers, appeared on the point of dissolution. The alliance of Austria and Russia, so often locked in deadly rivalry, foreshadowed the expulsion of the Turks from the entire Balkan Peninsula. At this critical moment in the history of the Balkans Joseph II. died (1790), and his untimely end diverted Austrian policy into other channels. The Serbian people, again enslaved by Turkey, suffered once more the bitterness of hope deferred. Their powerful neighbours had proved

*Efforts at  
emancipa-  
tion.*

<sup>1</sup> Cited, Miller, *The Balkans*, 306.

1804-6 — broken reeds ; and repeated disappointments drove home the lesson which the Dutch had learnt three centuries before in their struggle against Spain, that nations like individuals must fight their own battles.

Kara  
George.

The founder of the modern Serbian State was Kara George, the son of a peasant. Driven into revolt in company with other of his countrymen by the evil practices of the Janissaries quartered in Serbia (1804), he took refuge in the mountains, where he soon found himself at the head of a considerable force. It was fortunate for the Serbs that the Janissaries were equally obnoxious to the Sultan, whose authority they had defied by their insubordinate conduct and traitorous alliance with the rebellious Pasha of Widdin. The Porte therefore ordered the Pasha of Bosnia to combine with the Serbs in wresting Belgrade out of the hands of the Janissaries. The united forces accomplished their objective ; the Mussulman revolt was suppressed ; and Serbia was freed from the military oppression under which she had groaned. Flushed with their victory over the turbulent Janissaries, and finding themselves in possession of arms, the Serbs were now tempted to make a bid for independence against the Turkish Government itself. They demanded the evacuation of Serbian fortresses by Turkish troops. The Sultan was in no mood to concede a demand which would have destroyed his hold over the population. He endeavoured to crush the revolt of the Serbs, as he had crushed the revolt of the Janissaries. Army after army was sent against the insurgents, who profited by the rough and mountainous conditions of their country—conditions “ profoundly favourable to guerilla warfare.”<sup>1</sup> The war was brought to an end by the overwhelming defeat of the Turkish army at Mischar (1806). The Sultan yielded most liberal terms : complete autonomy, the evacuation of all Serbian fortresses except Belgrade, and the expropriation of Turkish landowners. It was indeed a memorable triumph for the Serbs, who had fought their way to freedom under their peasant leader without any foreign help. For a few years

<sup>1</sup> Lyde and Mockler-Ferryman, *A Military Geography of the Balkan Peninsula* (1905), 89.



the land had rest. The interests of Turkey demanded peace, for the shadow of Russia had fallen across her path. In 1812, however, the shadow passed away, and Russia, preoccupied with Napoleon's approaching invasion of her soil, did not attempt to save the Serbian people from reconquest. Kara George threw up the unequal contest in despair, but the mantle of the heroic Serbian leader fell upon the shoulders of another peasant, Milosh Obrenovich, the second founder of modern Serbia. The struggle for independence was renewed, and in 1815 the Sultan, again confronted by the prospect of Russian intervention, conceded the right of self-government. A few years later the Treaty of Adrianople (1829) <sup>1</sup> erected Serbia into what was practically an independent State, and Milosh was recognized as hereditary Prince.

It has been a grave misfortune for Serbia that she is indebted for her liberation to the founders of two rival dynasties, the Karageorgevich and the Obrenovich. The feuds of these families assumed from the first the character of a vendetta. Milosh set an evil precedent when he procured the assassination of Kara George (1817) in order to remove a dangerous rival from his path, and the crime was avenged to the second and third generations in the blood of his own kinsfolk. Moreover, his tyrannical rule and arbitrary exactions estranged his countrymen, and in 1839 he was forced to abdicate. He was succeeded by his two sons, Milan Obrenovich II. and Michael Obrenovich III. The former died almost immediately after his accession, and even the latter only occupied the throne for three short years. The Serbs next chose as their ruler Alexander Karageorgevich, the son of the great national leader. After a reign of sixteen years (1842-1858) Alexander in his turn was deposed. During the Crimean War he had remained neutral, and this policy was unpopular with the nation, whose sympathies were with Russia. Another change of dynasty now followed. Milosh was recalled from exile at the age of seventy-nine, and resumed his autocratic sway until his death in 1860. He handed on the reins of govern-

*Rival  
Serbian  
dynasties.*

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 193.

1860-77 — ment to his son, Michael Obrenovich III., who had occupied the throne for a short period eighteen years before. Prince Michael was the wisest and most capable ruler Serbia has yet known. He instituted various political and economic reforms adapted to the backward condition of his peasant subjects, and in 1867 he induced the Porte to withdraw the Turkish garrisons from all Serbian fortresses. By this great diplomatic triumph and the moderation of his rule Prince Michael had earned well of his country, but the adherents of the Karageorgevich dynasty were irreconcilable, and the Prince was brutally assassinated in 1868. An attempt was made to proclaim as his successor Peter Karageorgevich, son of the exiled Prince Alexander, but the energy of the Government defeated the project, and the crown devolved on Michael's cousin, Milan Obrenovich IV.

*The Russo-Turkish War of 1877.*

(The reign of Prince Milan is memorable for the great uprising of the Serbian race in 1875. We have already dealt with its influence upon the fortunes of Roumania and Bulgaria, and we have now to see how it affected Serbia and Montenegro. The movement began in the Herzegovina, where the peasantry suffered intolerable oppression at the hands of landlords and rapacious tax-farmers. It is said that the cultivator of the soil paid no less than two-thirds of his crop in taxes, and the burden of feudal obligations involved him in all the evils of economic servitude. The insurrection spread to Bosnia, and public opinion forced Serbia and Montenegro to come to the assistance of their oppressed Serbian kinsfolk. In the war which ensued the Turks were victorious, and Russia intervened to save Serbia from destruction. There seemed for a time a danger lest Russia would become embroiled with Great Britain, but the peril passed away as a result of the Bulgarian atrocities, which made it impossible for this country to ally itself with Turkey, as it had done in the Crimean War. "The impression produced here by events in Bulgaria," wrote the English Foreign Secretary, "has completely destroyed sympathy with Turkey. The feeling is universal and so strong that even if Russia were to declare war against the Porte, Her Majesty's Government would find it practically impossible







to interfere." The Treaty of San Stefano, by which the war was brought to an end, was favourable to the two Serbian States, whose frontiers now became almost coterminous. Serbia received a large accession of territory on the south, and Montenegro was "trebled in size and doubled in population." These terms, however, were revised at the Congress of Berlin. Montenegro was made to resign half her acquisitions, and Serbia was compensated for the loss of her southern gains at the expense of Bulgaria. In addition, Bosnia and the Herzegovina were "occupied" by Austria. This settlement drove a wedge between the Serbs of Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and the Herzegovina. It disappointed, therefore, the expectations of Serbian patriots, who had hoped to unite the whole Serbian race under one ruler, and it sowed the seeds of an irreconcilable feud between the Serbs and the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

1878-  
1903  
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As the result of the Russo-Turkish War, Serbia gained not only a great accession of territory, but the formal recognition of her independence, and in 1882 Prince Milan assumed the title of king.) For the next twenty years Serbian history is mainly a record of court scandals, assassinations, and repeated *coups d'État*. King Milan, who was very unpopular with his subjects, abdicated in 1889. His successor, Alexander, was a minor, and for a period of four years the country was ruled by Regents. In 1893 the King seized the reins of government into his hands and abolished the Liberal Constitution drawn up by his predecessor. An unfortunate marriage undermined his position, and in 1903, on the anniversary of the assassination of Prince Michael (June 10), he was foully murdered with his Queen by his own officers. The assassination of Alexander, who died without an heir, brought the Obrenovich dynasty to an end. The throne reverted to the Karageorgevich dynasty, now represented by King Peter, whose father had been Prince of Serbia for sixteen years (1842-1858). In two respects the new sovereign differed from his predecessors. He abandoned the Austrophil policy of King Milan, and—as was fitting for one who had translated John Stuart Mill's *Essay on Liberty*—he governed Serbia as a constitutional King.

The  
Serbian  
monarchy

## CHAPTER VII

### THE EUROPEAN CONCERT

1815-23

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*The  
dream of  
universal  
peace.*

AMONG the effects of the French Revolution on English political thought, perhaps the most important, and certainly the most immediate, lay in concentrating the attention of English reformers on the possibility of universal peace. The main accusation brought against the eighteenth-century governments was that they sacrificed the interests of the nation to the dynastic and territorial ambitions of its rulers. In every country, wrote Thomas Paine in the *Rights of Man*, we see "age going to the workhouse and youth to the gallows"; and he attributed the poverty and wretchedness of the great bulk of mankind to the perpetual system of war and the enormous burden of taxation which it necessarily involved. The money wasted on war, and the preparations for war, deprived civilization of its abundance, and ground the poor down to the extremest poverty. The French Revolution inspired the belief in English writers that the dawn of peace was at hand, and that democracy would unite nations in the bonds of lasting friendship. The history of the nineteenth century has shown how little this expectation was fulfilled. The warm hopes which filled the hearts of English reformers were doomed to disappointment, and the golden age which the Revolution promised was never fulfilled. For Rousseau and the vision of nature were substituted Napoleon and a Europe in arms, and a titanic duel ensued between France and the Coalition, extending over twenty years. The close of the revolutionary epoch left Europe satiated with blood, and painfully anxious to devise a form of international government which would



serve as a security against the menace of future wars. The experiment of a European Concert lasted eight years (1815-1823); its history and the causes of its failure convey a lesson of profound interest at a time when the course of events has produced a situation parallel, in many respects, to that which existed over a hundred years ago. 1815-23  
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The idea of a commonwealth of nations was not a creation of the nineteenth century; it was a legacy of mediæval political philosophy. The Holy Roman Empire was the earliest form of a European Confederation, and it represented a rudimentary attempt to give substance to the vision of Isaiah—a world united in peace. After the Reformation the Holy Roman Empire ceased, even in theory, to be the pivot of the European state-system; and the public law of Europe, as enunciated in the classical treatises of Grotius and other famous publicists, entirely discarded the notion of a supreme head ruling over a community of nations. Henceforth the cardinal doctrine of international relationships rested upon the theory that all sovereign States are not only absolutely independent, but treat with each other upon a footing of complete legal equality; and whether weak or strong, they are burdened with the same rights and obligations. International law, as it is now constituted, no longer recognizes the existence of a sovereign authority empowered to settle disputes and issue commands having the force of law. In practice, however, this doctrine of the legal equality of States has been superseded by the actual political superiority of the Great Powers. In the nineteenth century the destinies of Europe were in the hands of five or six States, which arrogated to themselves a preponderant influence in all matters of general concern: for example, the separation of Holland and Belgium,<sup>1</sup> and the Eastern Question.<sup>2</sup> We might suppose that this predominance of the great States and elimination of the secondary States would have facilitated the harmonious working of a European Concert, but in reality the effect was to sharpen the rivalry of the survivors. Hence a situation emerged in which Europe became divided into two armed camps,

*The  
European  
Confeder-  
ation.*

<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, p. 229,

<sup>2</sup> *Supra*, Chapter VI.

1815 — and the prospect of international comity appeared more remote than ever. The purpose of the present chapter is to examine the reasons why the first serious effort to establish a Confederated Europe failed so disastrously.

*The  
Vienna  
Congress.*

The close of the Napoleonic Wars seemed to afford a unique opportunity for an international experiment: the establishment of a European federal system. The danger of revolutionary propaganda had drawn together the Great Powers in a coalition which had finally imposed its will upon the French people. The question therefore arose whether it was possible to create a United Europe, sharing common rights and acknowledging common obligations. But the Congress of Vienna disappointed the expectations of a confederated Europe. "Men had promised themselves," wrote Gentz in a survey of the work accomplished by the Vienna Congress, "an all-embracing reform of the political system of Europe; guarantees for peace; in one word, the return of the Golden Ages. The Congress has resulted in nothing but restorations, which had already been effected by arms; agreements between the Great Powers, of little value for the future balance and preservation of the peace of Europe; quite arbitrary alterations in the possessions of the less important States; but in no act of a higher nature, no great measure for public order or for the universal good, which might compensate humanity for its long sufferings or reassure it as to the future. . . . The Protocol of the Congress bears the stamp rather of a temporary agreement than of work destined to last for centuries."

*Why the  
European  
Concert  
failed.*

The ultimate reason why the Great Powers failed to work together in harmony after the fall of Napoleon must be ascribed to fundamental diversities in their ideas and institutions. In a well-ordered community all men are not required to profess identical opinions on social, religious, or political questions; they can combine their efforts for the common good, and co-operate in the pursuit of common ends, without sharing the same sentiments on every conceivable subject. A dead level of uniformity, rightly understood, is a source of weakness rather than of strength, for variation is the law of our being and the primary condi-

tion of progress. None the less, association for any purpose necessarily implies a general similarity of outlook, consciousness of mutual interests, and willingness to sacrifice freedom of action. Upon the extent to which these postulates are satisfied, will depend whether a State is unitary like Great Britain, or federal like the United States of America. Where none of these postulates are satisfied, there can exist neither a unitary State nor a federal State. Now in 1815 the development of Europe was not sufficiently advanced to fulfil any of these conditions, and this explains the fundamental weakness of the new international structure and its rapid collapse. The history of (1) the Holy Alliance, and (2) the Quadruple Alliance, will serve to show why it was impossible to establish, in the words of Gentz, "a political system by which wars of conquest would be rendered impossible." The delicate adjustment of rival national claims was to prove a task insuperable for the nineteenth century.

1815  
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(1) The Holy Alliance was the creation of Alexander I. The Russian Emperor was a visionary and a mystic, open to generous impulses, but a man of moods and unstable imagination. In the early part of his reign he showed a leaning towards Liberal principles, going so far as to bestow a Constitution on Poland, while he also contemplated a Constitution even for Russia. His Liberalism, it is true, never penetrated far below the surface; for, as his own minister, Czartoryski, wrote: "The Emperor would willingly have consented that every one should be free, on condition that every one should do his will alone."<sup>1</sup> The plan of a European Confederation naturally made a warm appeal to his impressionable temperament. Two centuries before, Henry IV. of France had unfolded a somewhat similar idea to the Holy Alliance in the Grand Design, which is said to have been inspired by Queen Elizabeth. It set up a General Council, or Senate, modelled on the Amphictyonic Council of Greece, comprising sixty-six delegates from the different countries, whose duties were to settle disputes and keep the peace of Europe. Sully

*Alex-  
ander's  
schemes  
for a con-  
federated  
Europe.*

<sup>1</sup> W. A. Phillips, *The Confederation of Europe* (1914), 57.



1804  
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described the purpose of the Grand Design as intended "to deliver them for ever from the fear of bloody catastrophes, so common in Europe; to secure for them an unalterable repose, so that all the princes might henceforth live together as brothers."<sup>1</sup> This scheme was cut short by Henry's death in 1610, but it reappeared a century later in the *Projet de paix perpétuelle* of the Abbé de St. Pierre (1713), which proposed the formation of a European League, whose members surrendered the right of making war on each other, and submitted their differences to the arbitration of a permanent Congress.<sup>2</sup> At the beginning of the nineteenth century it was again revived by the Russian Emperor. "The drawback to Russia as an ally," said Moltke, "is that she arrives on the field very late, and is then too strong." This happened in the War of Liberation, and the unbroken strength of his forces in the field gave Alexander a preponderant influence in the councils of the Allies, which he now employed on behalf of his favourite project. Already in 1804 he had made overtures to England for a new international system, which was chiefly noteworthy for the admission that the peace of Europe could never be established until the "internal order" of every country "shall have been founded on a wise liberty," as "a barrier against the passions, the unbridled ambition, or the madness which often drives out of their senses" those in whom power is vested. These memorable words recall the teaching of Kant, that the only possible basis of universal peace is true representative government.<sup>3</sup> Alexander's overtures resulted in a treaty between Great Britain and Russia, in which Pitt agreed that after the conclusion of peace the Great Powers should guarantee each other their possessions, in order to prevent "future attempts to trouble the general tranquillity."<sup>4</sup> It is clear that the English minister meant only that France should not be allowed to disturb the future settlement of Europe by fresh "projects of aggrandizement

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires de Sully* (ed. 1745), ii. 81; iii. bk. xxx.

<sup>2</sup> The provisions are given in Phillips, *op. cit.* 22.

<sup>3</sup> Kant, *Perpetual Peace* (ed. M. Campbell Smith, 1903), 120 seq. Cf. also 33 seq.

<sup>4</sup> Phillips, *op. cit.* 34, 38.

and ambition." Alexander, on the other hand, interpreted his scheme in the light of a European League on the lines of the Grand Design. Thus, while Great Britain was concerned only with an immediate and practical object—the overthrow of Napoleon—the Emperor entertained the more ambitious idea of a supreme court whose sphere should cover all matters of European interest. This clash of opinions could no longer be concealed after Alexander published to the world the plan of the Holy Alliance. The English Government withheld its signature, declining to stultify its freedom of action by taking part in a vague and shadowy project which bound the contracting monarchs "on all occasions and in all places [to] lend each other aid and assistance."

1815  
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The Holy Alliance has been greatly misunderstood; not only has its purpose been misinterpreted, but its practical significance has been overrated. It was regarded at the time as a symbol of Reaction, a conspiracy against Liberalism, a league of princes against their peoples. It is worth while to quote the text of the Holy Alliance in order to show how far this view is justified. "The present Act," it is solemnly declared by the contracting parties, "has no other object than to publish, in the face of the whole world, their fixed resolution, both in the administration of their respective States and in their political relations with every other Government, to take for their sole guide the precepts of that Holy Religion, namely, the precepts of Justice, Christian Charity and Peace, which, far from being applicable only to private concerns, must have an immediate influence on the counsels of Princes, and guide all their steps, as being the only means of consolidating human institutions and remedying their imperfections."<sup>1</sup> Translated into other terms, the Holy Alliance seemed to imply nothing more than that sovereigns were henceforth to regard each other as brothers "united by the bonds of a true and indissoluble fraternity," and their subjects as their children, whom they were to rule "as fathers of families." This exemplary doctrine, honoured in the breach but rarely in the observance,

*The Holy Alliance.*

<sup>1</sup> Hertslet, *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, i. 317.

1815

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and subscribed to by the three great autocracies, naturally awakened the suspicion that it veiled a sinister design against the liberties of Europe. This, however, was not the case; on the contrary, Alexander even sought to persuade his allies that the Holy Alliance involved as its corollary the acceptance of constitutional principles of government.

*How far  
signifi-  
cant.*

The Holy Alliance was nominally, then, an attempt to apply the principles of morality to international diplomacy, in other words, to create in Europe a political conscience. To all intents and purposes this nebulous scheme, which loomed so prominently before the eyes of contemporaries, never materialized, and was still-born. All Alexander's efforts were unavailing "to provide the transparent soul of the Holy Alliance with a body." Castlereagh treated it as "a piece of sublime mysticism and nonsense"; and Metternich, who regarded the Russian Emperor as a Jacobin, looked upon it as merely a "loud-sounding nothing," or "moral demonstration." "The Holy Alliance," he explained, "was merely a philanthropic aspiration clothed in a religious garb." It "was not an institution to keep down the rights of the people, to promote absolutism or any other tyranny. It was only the overflow of the pietistic feeling of the Emperor Alexander and the application of Christian principles to politics."<sup>1</sup> But though the practical importance of the Holy Alliance was negligible, it merits attention because it disclosed a fundamental disparity of opinion between the Eastern Powers on the one hand and the British Government on the other.

*The  
system of  
Metter-  
nich.*

(2) We have seen how Alexander's vision of a Holy Alliance was shattered, in so far as its main purpose was concerned, by the refusal of English statesmen to be drawn into an alliance whose objects were so vague and undefined. A like fate overtook what may be termed the 'system of Metternich,' which eventually led England to withdraw from the European Concert and "move steadily on in her own orbit."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Metternich, *Memoirs*, i. 260, 262.

<sup>2</sup> Canning's words: A. G. Stapleton, *The Political Life of George Canning* (1831), i. 489.



While persisting in her resolution to hold aloof from the Holy Alliance, Great Britain was willing to co-operate with the Continental Powers for certain well-defined ends. As early as 1791 Kaunitz, the Austrian minister, had urged that since Europe was "a single family of nations," it was the duty of all States "to make common cause in order to preserve the public peace, the tranquillity of States, the inviolability of possessions, and the faith of treaties."<sup>1</sup> His proposals were directed against France, and the European Concert in its origin was thus the direct outcome of the French Revolution. For over twenty years the Governments of Europe fought the revolutionary democracy of France, resisting the aggression of French ideas and French force; and coalition after coalition was built up until Napoleon, exhausted by the struggle, finally succumbed at Waterloo. After the Congress of Vienna the dissolution of the Quadruple Alliance—consisting of Great Britain, Austria, Russia, and Prussia—appeared imminent, since it had now achieved the purpose for which it was originally formed. Indeed, from the start its existence had been endangered by petty jealousies and rivalries, which were only hushed for the moment by the dramatic episode of the Hundred Days when Napoleon returned from Elba. In reality the work of the Quadruple Alliance was not completed, and it was necessary to devise measures which would shield the new order in Europe from the shock of fresh revolutionary assaults. The reception accorded by the French nation to Napoleon upon his reappearance in their midst showed that he still retained his extraordinary hold upon their affections. It demonstrated that France at heart was not reconciled to the Government imposed upon her by the arms of the Allies, and it seemed to suggest that at the first opportunity the old revolutionary passions would blaze out again in a great national effort to recover the Rhine frontier. The peril of French propaganda had called into existence the Concert of Europe, and the dread of France continued to keep the Quadruple Alliance together even after Waterloo. In order to safeguard the territorial

1815

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The  
Quadruple  
Alliance.

<sup>1</sup> A. Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française* (1887), ii. 232-3.

1815 — and political settlement so laboriously constructed by the Congress of Vienna, the Allies must be prepared for a renewal of the conflict at the first sign of unrest. Accordingly, in November 1815, the four Great Powers contracted a Treaty of Alliance, purporting "to guarantee Europe from dangers by which she may still be menaced." The purpose of the Alliance was laid down in clear unmistakable terms, testifying to the fear that "Revolutionary principles . . . might again . . . convulse France, and thereby endanger the peace of other States."<sup>1</sup> The contrast between the Treaty of Alliance, openly designed as it was for a definite and practical object, and the Holy Alliance with its vague and nebulous principles, served to measure the difference between the idealism of Alexander and the sober statesmanship of Castlereagh.

*The  
Treaty of  
Alliance.*

The Treaty of Alliance, while framed in a moderate and cautious spirit, contained one clause which lent itself to elastic interpretation. This was the famous Sixth Article, which on account of its extreme importance merits quotation: "In order to consolidate the connexions which at the present moment so closely unite the four sovereigns, the High Contracting Parties have agreed to renew at fixed intervals, either under their own auspices or by their representative ministers, meetings consecrated to great common objects and the examination of such measures as at each one of these epochs shall be judged most salutary for the peace and prosperity of the nations, and for the maintenance of the peace of Europe." This Article was the foundation of the European Concert destined, as will be seen, to cover a period of eight years (1815-1823). It provided a basis for common action on the part of the Great Powers, who were to hold periodical conferences in order to deal with the various questions submitted for their consideration. Now it was immediately apparent that meetings consecrated to great objects would not confine their attention to the situation in France; thus the Article pledged the Allies to co-operate together in a variety of matters which had nothing to do with the nominal objects for which the Alliance existed.

<sup>1</sup> Hertslet, *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, i. 372 seq.

Hence, while Great Britain disclaimed the principles embodied in the Holy Alliance, she found herself committed to a system of joint conferences, unconscious at the moment of the purpose to which the conferences would be turned. The net result, in short, was to substitute the hegemony of the Allies for the federative unity of all the Powers as contemplated by Alexander. In the eyes of the secondary States the dictatorship of the four Great Powers was, in a moral sense, no less unjustifiable than the dictatorship of Napoleon which it superseded ; but they protested in vain. We have now to see how these Congresses—which were four in number, Aix-la-Chapelle, Troppau, Laibach, and Verona—worked out in practice. Their history will serve also to elucidate the principles by which English policy during this period was governed.

The first Congress met in 1818 at Aix-la-Chapelle after an interval of three years. Metternich, who wrote that he had “ never seen a prettier little Congress,”<sup>1</sup> had good reason to congratulate himself on its success, for it marked the zenith of the system by which the Allied Powers endeavoured to establish a joint control over the affairs of all continental States. Like the Amphictyonic Council of Greece, the Congress was universally recognized as the supreme council of Europe, and it entertained appeals in the most miscellaneous matters. Denmark invoked assistance against Sweden ; the Elector of Hesse petitioned for the title of king ; German princes sought redress of their grievances ; the people of Monaco complained against their ruler ; and the Congress also dealt with the disputed succession to the duchy of Baden and the position of Jewish citizens in Austria and Prussia. In spite of the moral ascendancy of the Congress, however, the inherent weakness of the system which it embodied was already in evidence. The Congress at Aix-la-Chapelle witnessed, in fact, the first rift in the lute, which steadily widened at subsequent Congresses until the whole Alliance was shattered to pieces. On the question of the evacuation of France there was general agreement, and at the same time France was admitted into the Alliance

1818

(1) *The Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle* (1818).

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs*, iii. 144.



1818 — which now became, in the phrase of Metternich, a “moral pentarchy.” But in other directions a fundamental divergence of opinions was speedily disclosed. In the first place the failure to settle the two outstanding questions of the Congress—regarding the Slave Trade and the Barbary pirates—showed that, where any question seriously affected its interests, no State was prepared to make concessions or sacrifice its own inclinations and wishes for the common good. In order to suppress the Slave Trade, Great Britain suggested that the European States should exercise a mutual right of search, but the proposal was wrecked from jealousy of England’s sea-power, since none of the countries would tolerate interference with their commercial relations. The Barbary pirates menaced the whole European seaboard, and Russia proposed that an international fleet should be stationed in the Mediterranean to stamp out the evil. Great Britain, whose flag the Barbary pirates respected, was alarmed at the prospect of a Russian navy in the Mediterranean ; and the project therefore fell to the ground. Thus incurable distrust fomented the spirit of discord and foiled all attempts at effective concert and harmonious co-operation.

*Its significance.*

The real significance of the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, however, lies deeper ; it awakened for the first time the apprehensions of English statesmen as to the real character of the principles underlying the European Concert. Alexander proposed that a Declaration should be signed by all the Powers guaranteeing the existing territorial settlement and the rights of sovereign princes. This proposal was greatly welcomed by Austria and Prussia. On his part Metternich recognized that a universal guarantee of the *status quo* would facilitate the systematic suppression of free institutions, stifling the development of Europe in the fetters of hide-bound conservatism. It pledged the European States to concert common measures against revolution and to come to the assistance of any Government which was unable to keep its subjects in order. It was, in fact, nothing less than a crusade against the heresy of revolution, and would have retarded indefinitely all constitutional progress.

It would have been equally fatal to the other great revolutionary force of the nineteenth century, the principle of nationality. It guaranteed the inviolability of possessions, and this would have prevented the unification of Italy and Germany ; the separation of Holland and Belgium, Norway and Sweden ; the liberation of the Balkan States—in a word, the map of Europe as it is to-day. Accordingly the European Concert, as conceived at this period by Russia, Austria and Prussia, would have secured the peace of Europe at the price of constitutional liberty and national independence. The credit for the failure of this sinister project belonged to the British Government whose firm attitude compelled the other Powers to abandon the scheme. The point at issue really turned on the right of intervention : it involved the fundamental question whether the five Great Powers, the moral pentarchy of Europe, were entitled to arrogate to themselves authority to intervene in any country on the pretext of preserving the *status quo*. The nominal purpose of the Concert of Europe was to prevent the recurrence of those revolutionary wars, which had already engulfed the Continent once in a sea of blood and might do so again. This logically implied a certain degree of control over the external relations of the different countries, which in its turn seemed to involve the right to regulate their internal affairs. For since Europe, in the words of Kaunitz, constituted “ a single family of nations,” what concerned one concerned all ; and the infection of a revolution which was not stamped out at its source would spread over Europe with the rapidity of lightning. This actually happened in 1830 and 1848, when the example set by the democracy of Paris awakened echoes in almost every capital on the Continent. None the less England refused to subscribe to a doctrine of intervention fraught with such deadly menace to the national liberties of every European country. It is true that the case of France could be cited as an example of intervention, but one isolated instance did not establish a principle. The circumstances were clearly exceptional, yet even here Castlereagh in the Treaty of Alliance (1815), the original basis of the European Concert, had been careful to

1818  
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1820-21 — prevent "too strong and undisguised an interference in the internal concerns of France." In regard to other States, Great Britain was not prepared to acquiesce in any general principle of international control; each particular emergency was to be considered separately as it arose, in order that the Powers should not be bound beforehand to a course of action which might be injurious to the interests of the nation concerned. The English Government strenuously repudiated the idea that the collective force of the Allies was "to be prostituted to the support of established power, without any consideration of the extent to which it was abused." The Alliance, protested Castlereagh, was never "intended as an union for the government of the World, or for the superintendence of the internal affairs of other States."<sup>1</sup> Its purpose was not to suppress revolutionary movements in whatever part of Europe they might break out, independent of the special circumstances which might be pleaded on their behalf. With the fear of Parliament before their eyes, neither Castlereagh, Wellington, nor Canning, dared embark upon an uncharted sea, where navigation was particularly perilous when the helm was guided by Governments so reactionary as those of Austria and Russia.

(2) and (3)  
The Con-  
gresses of  
Troppau  
and  
Laibach  
(1820-21).

The suspicions of English ministers, first awakened at Aix-la-Chapelle, that the Concert of Europe threatened to extinguish the liberties of Europe, were amply confirmed by the proceedings at the Congresses held in later years. The second Congress met at Troppau in 1820, and the following year was adjourned to Laibach. It was summoned on account of the Neapolitan revolt, with whose history we have already dealt.<sup>2</sup> Under pressure from his subjects Ferdinand, King of Naples, had been compelled to grant a Constitution, and this afforded Austria a pretext for intervention. Castlereagh's attitude was clearly defined from the outset. He believed that Austria was justified in interfering in Naples for two reasons. In the first place she had great interests at stake in the Peninsula; and the stability of her dominion in Lombardy, Venetia, and the Central States

<sup>1</sup> Stapleton, *The Political Life of Canning*, i. 139.

<sup>2</sup> *Supra*, p. 164.



was imperilled by the revolutionary ferment in the south. 1820-21  
In the second place, a treaty concluded by Ferdinand with  
the Austrian Emperor five years before entitled the latter  
to resist any changes in the Neapolitan system of government  
inconsistent with the principles adopted by Austria in her  
own Italian provinces.<sup>1</sup> On these grounds none of the  
Powers protested against Austria lending her forces to crush  
the Neapolitan rising, although Ferdinand's appeal for  
assistance was a flagrant breach of the solemn oath he had  
taken to respect the new Constitution. Metternich, how-  
ever, was not content with the bare recognition of his right  
to exercise a free hand in Italian affairs. He wanted the  
moral support of the Allies and proposed that they should  
back up the Austrian policy by refusing to acknowledge the  
revolutionary Government of Naples, and at the same time  
bring diplomatic pressure to bear upon the situation through  
their ministers. To this proposal Castlereagh returned a  
categorical refusal. He took his stand by the principle that  
no State was justified in meddling with the domestic affairs  
of any other State unless on grounds of treaty rights. The  
Neapolitan revolt lay outside the orbit of Great Britain's  
concerns, and this country having no legitimate pretext for  
interference would preserve an attitude of strict neutrality.  
The case of Austria rested on a different footing ; her treaty  
with Naples gave her a legal excuse for intervention, if she  
considered that her vital interests were at stake. Metternich,  
on the other hand, was anxious to obtain a mandate from  
Europe in order to establish the right of intervention not on  
narrow legal grounds, but on the broad basis of a general  
principle—the principle, namely, that popular insurrections,  
revolutions originating from below, were ' illegitimate,' and  
should be placed under the ban of Europe as a violation of  
its public law. In adopting this standpoint the Austrian  
statesman formulated a policy containing within it the  
seeds of disruption, since it was bound sooner or later to  
occasion a schism in the Alliance.

Metternich's hands were strengthened at this juncture  
by a change which took place in the personal views of the

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 166.

1820-21

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 Alex-  
 ander's  
 'conver-  
 sion.'

Emperor Alexander. The murder of Kotzebue<sup>1</sup> had shaken his faith in Liberal principles which were never deep-seated, and his alienation was completed by the news of a mutiny of the Imperial Guards at Petrograd. The revolt was provoked by the cruelty of the German colonel of the regiment, who had introduced Prussian methods of discipline and "did not spare" his men "any of those indignities which are as dishonouring to those who suffer as to those who inflict them."<sup>2</sup> No political significance, therefore, attached to the mutiny, but it served to throw Alexander unreservedly into the arms of the Austrian minister. "So we are at one, Prince, and it is to you that we owe it," he said to Metternich at Troppau. "You have correctly judged the state of affairs. I deplore the waste of time, which we must try to repair. I am here without any fixed ideas; without any plan; but I bring you a firm and unalterable resolution. It is for your Emperor to use it as he wills. Tell me what you desire, and what you wish me to do, and I will do it."<sup>3</sup> The results of Alexander's conversion to the Austrian 'system' were, in a diplomatic sense, momentous. Hitherto Austria had entertained a profound distrust of Russian policy, believing that the mass of verbiage in which Alexander wrapped his lofty sentiments veiled a secret determination to make himself the dictator of Europe. It was well known, for example, that Russian agents had spread themselves over every part of the Continent, encouraging revolutionary unrest and inspiring the belief that Russian influence would be exerted on the side of progressive movements. Hence for five years the counsels of Metternich had been distracted by the fear of an alliance between Russia, on the one hand, and France and the minor German States—like Würtemberg—on the other. The reconciliation with Alexander simplified the position immensely, for it ensured that Austria in her campaign against Liberalism could henceforth rely upon Russian support. Thus it foreshadowed the cleavage of the Quintuple Alliance into two divisions: on the one side the reactionary Governments of Austria,

<sup>1</sup> *Subra*, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Phillips, *Confederation of Europe*, 220, n. 38.  
<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 219.

Russia and Prussia ; on the other side the constitutional Governments of Great Britain and France.

1820

The altered situation was reflected in the famous Protocol of Troppau, which enshrined the principle of intervention in set terms : " States which have undergone a change of Government due to revolution, the results of which threaten other States, *ipso facto* cease to be members of the European Alliance, and remain excluded from it until their situation gives guarantees for legal order and stability. If, owing to such alterations, immediate danger threatens other States, the Powers bind themselves, by peaceful means, or if need be by arms, to bring back the guilty State into the bosom of the Great Alliance." Great Britain refused to be a party to this declaration. A second time Castlereagh reiterated his objection to the attempt " to reduce to an abstract rule of conduct possible cases of interference in the internal affairs of independent States." The arguments he employed in a skilful analysis of the situation were irrefutable. The Protocol would be interpreted as a league of sovereigns against their subjects and so hasten the advent of the very revolutionary crisis it was intended to hold in check. Moreover, " would the Great Powers of Europe be prepared to admit the principle that their territories were to be thrown open to each other's approach upon cases of assumed necessity or expediency, of which not the party receiving aid, but the party administering it, was to be the judge ? " <sup>1</sup> An English minister who dared to endorse the application of this principle to Great Britain would lay himself open to impeachment ; and it was equally out of question to sanction its application to other States as part of the public law of Europe. The French Revolution was exceptional " from its overbearing and conquering character " ; it did not justify intervention in all cases of revolution. In short, the British Government expressly dissociated itself from " the moral responsibility " of a police-system which would inevitably " lead to the creation of a species of general government in Europe, with a superintending Directory, destructive of all correct notions of internal sovereign authority "

*The Protocol of Troppau.*

<sup>1</sup> See *Camb. Mod. Hist.* x. 28 seq., and Phillips, *op. cit.* 222 seq.



1822

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(4) *The  
Congress  
of Verona  
(1822).*

The fourth and final Congress was held at Verona in 1822. It dealt almost exclusively with the Spanish Question. As the result of a revolution in 1820, the King of Spain, Ferdinand VII., had been forced to abolish the Inquisition and proclaim a Constitution; but from the first he acted with duplicity, invoking foreign help against his own subjects. His solicitations met with a favourable response from the Ultra-Royalists, who were pursuing under the influence of Chateaubriand a policy of glory and were eager to espouse the cause of the Bourbon King.<sup>1</sup> At the Congress of Verona, France announced her intention to intervene in Spain to restore the absolute monarchy, and claimed the moral support of the Allied Powers. Austria, Russia and Prussia replied, as Wellington, the British plenipotentiary, informed the home Government, that they would give France every countenance and assistance she should require. Great Britain, on the other hand, remained obdurate, adhering steadfastly to the doctrine of non-intervention. The instructions of Wellington insisted upon "a rigid abstinence from any interference in the internal affairs" of Spain. The result was therefore a definite breach with the continental Powers, and when a French army crossed the Spanish frontier the collapse of the European system was rendered complete and undisguised. Canning, who had succeeded Castlereagh as Foreign Secretary on the eve of the Congress of Verona, felt no misgivings at this failure of the European Concert. He did not conceal his gratification that "the issue of Verona [had] split the one and indivisible Alliance into three parts as distinct as the Constitutions of England, France and Muscovy."<sup>2</sup> "Things are getting back to a wholesome state again," he wrote. "Every nation for itself, and God for us all. The time for Areopagus, and the like of that, is gone by."

*Collapse  
of the  
European  
Concert.*

The attempt to establish a Federated Europe was thus shipwrecked upon the rock of conflicting national aspirations. It was impossible to reconcile the divergent views of Great Britain on the one hand, and those of the continental Powers on the other. The key to British policy was the principle

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Stapleton, *Canning and his Times*, 369.

of non-intervention in the affairs of sovereign and independent States. To this principle Castlereagh and Canning consistently adhered, though the former was anxious to avoid an open rupture with the Allied Courts. His successor, however, had no such scruples ; and Metternich looked upon him, therefore, as a " malevolent meteor hurled by an angry Providence upon Europe." <sup>1</sup> Canning's letter to the British ambassador at Vienna in 1823 expressed in unequivocal language the course of action which the English Government from the first had steadfastly pursued. " England is under no obligation to interfere, or to assist in interfering, in the internal concerns of independent nations. The specific engagement to interfere in France is an exception so studiously particularized as to prove the rule. The rule I take to be, that our engagements have reference wholly to the state of territorial possession settled at the Peace ; to the state of affairs between nation and nation ; not (with the single exception above stated) to the affairs of any nation within itself." He added : " What is the influence we have had in the counsels of the Alliance ? We protested at Laibach, we remonstrated at Verona. Our protest was treated as waste-paper ; our remonstrances mingled with the air. Our influence, if it is to be maintained abroad, must be secure in the sources of strength at home ; and the sources of that strength are in the sympathy between the people and the Government ; in the union of the public sentiment with the public counsels ; in the reciprocal confidence and co-operation of the House of Commons and the Crown." <sup>2</sup> The justification of England's attitude lay in the fact that, while the Alliance had been formed with the definite purpose of safeguarding the new order in Europe from the peril of a revolutionary France, the autocratic Powers sought to convert it into a bulwark of conservatism, *a barrier against all progressive movements.*

1823  
—

<sup>1</sup> Canning's opinion of Metternich was equally uncomplimentary. In 1825 he wrote to Lord Granville : " You ask me what you shall say to Metternich. In the first place you shall hear what I think of him—that he is the greatest r—— and l—— on the Continent, perhaps in the civilized world " : Stapleton, *Canning and his Times*, 427.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 374.

1823

*The  
awakening  
of the  
nation-  
alities.*

In asserting the rights of nationality Great Britain helped to liberate a mighty force of whose potentiality she was at the time supremely unconscious. Her policy was opportunist, caring solely for what seemed practical and expedient, and eschewing principles which were abstract and theoretical. She rendered no active assistance to the great national movements which shattered the territorial system established by the Vienna Congress in 1815 and remoulded the map of Europe. Yet her defection from the Concert of Europe gave the death-blow to a political system which would have strangled at its birth, or postponed indefinitely, the growth of a national spirit. Almost inevitably, however, British policy involved itself in contradictions which to all appearance were unavoidable. "Our business," declared Canning, "is to preserve the peace of the world"; and, as the means to this, he proclaimed the need of safeguarding the independence of the nations. He could not foretell that the result of the awakening of nationalities would be not only to adjourn the blessings of universal peace, but ultimately to provoke the greatest conflagration the world has yet witnessed. Still, while the dream of a Confederated Europe was finally dissipated after the Congress of Verona, and the effort to govern Europe through a council of the Great Powers was not repeated, the traditions of concerted action in international affairs continued to survive. Europe was henceforth divided into two camps; on the one side the three Eastern Powers, welded together in an alliance avowedly intended to stamp out all revolutionary movements; and on the other side the two Western Powers, the champions of nationality and constitutional principles of government. But, in spite of this division, Europe still remained, as Kaunitz had described it, a family of nations, and its members had too many interests in common for each to plough a lonely furrow. Hence, from time to time, the European Concert reappeared throughout the course of the nineteenth century; and the Great Powers, drawn together in a temporary union by the needs of the moment, imposed their will upon the whole of Europe. Three main problems furnished material for common action: (1) the Eastern



Question, with which we have already dealt ; (2) the establishment of the Kingdom of Belgium ; and (3) the Polish Question.

1815  
—

The union of Belgium and Holland was part of the territorial settlement of 1815. For over two centuries these countries had remained separate from one another. When the Dutch people renounced their allegiance to Philip II., they severed their connexion with their southern neighbours, who continued under the rule of Spain, until they were annexed first by Austria, and then by France during the French Revolution. The collapse of the Napoleonic Empire liberated Belgium from French control, but the Allies treated it as conquered territory to be disposed of as best they pleased. Austria refused to burden herself again with an outlying province so much exposed to French aggression,<sup>1</sup> and sought compensation in North Italy. Castlereagh, therefore, proposed that Belgium should be incorporated with the Kingdom of the Netherlands under the sovereignty of the House of Orange. "The establishment of a just equilibrium in Europe," it was explained, "demanded that Holland be constituted so as to be in a position to maintain its independence by its own resources." What this meant was that a new State must be established on the north-eastern frontier of France strong enough to hold in check a French attack. The celebrated Eight Articles laid down the conditions of the Union. Among other provisions, the two countries were to 'amalgamate' as one State ; religious equality was guaranteed as well as complete reciprocity of commercial rights and constitutional privileges ; and the public debts of both provinces were made a common charge on the State treasury. So far as the union of two distinct entities can be cemented by diplomacy, nothing was left undone to weld the Low Countries into a consolidated State. It is also fair to remark that the Union had greater prospects of success than historians are wont to recognize. Admittedly,

*Union of  
Holland  
and  
Belgium in  
1815.*

<sup>1</sup> "We wished to remove our country from direct contact with France, and thus put an end to the wars which had been in consequence of this contact perpetually occurring between the two neighbouring Empires" : Metternich, *Memoirs*, i. 264.

1815-30 — it was a defiance of the principle of nationality ; it linked together two different races, two different religions, two different languages, perhaps most important of all, two different sets of traditions. There was, however, another side to the picture. The union of the two countries threw open to the Belgians the free navigation of the Scheldt, and gave them access to the Dutch colonial possessions. As a result, " Belgium made great advances in material prosperity. The means of communication by road and canal were greatly improved. The mineral resources of the country were developed. Flourishing iron, wool, and cotton manufactures were established. Liège, Ghent, Verviers and other places became thriving industrial centres ; and, owing to the extensive colonial and foreign markets thrown open by the Dutch connexion, the volume of Belgian trade kept growing year by year. The southern provinces had thus from the material point of view every reason to be satisfied with the results of the Union ; and there can be but little doubt that, by the exercise of wise and conciliatory statesmanship, the friction which was certain to attend the compulsory fusion of two peoples might have been greatly diminished, so that in process of time Belgian and Hollander might have been taught to recognize that the political and commercial advantages of Union were worth the sacrifices and the concessions required from each for the common good. But this was not to be." <sup>1</sup>

*Causes of  
Belgian  
discontent.*

A variety of causes combined to bring about the Revolution of 1830. Holland, with a population of two millions, and Belgium, with a population nearly twice the size, were represented in the States-General by an equal number of deputies. The political inferiority of the Belgians was brought home to them by the fact that Belgian deputies who held office under the Government voted with the Dutch, thus giving Holland a majority in the Chamber. Administrative inequality between the two countries was even more marked. The heads of public departments, the civil service, the diplomatic profession, the higher military commands, were recruited in the main from the Dutch people. This

<sup>1</sup> G. Edmundson, " The Low Countries " in *Camb. Mod. Hist.* x. 524-5.

unwise discrimination between Belgian and Hollander, which was as impolitic as it was unjust, furnished legitimate ground for complaint; but the opposition raised by the extreme Catholic party to the principle of religious equality was less commendable. The thorny problem of language, as was inevitable, also provoked acute dissensions. The Belgians are divided into Flemings (Flanders and Brabant) and Walloons (Hainault, Namur, and Liége). The former comprise two-thirds of the population, and their language is almost Dutch; the speech of the latter, on the other hand, resembles French. The Dutch language had, therefore, the prior claim to become ultimately the national tongue of the new Netherland State; but the attempt to make it by compulsion the official language of Belgium added fuel to the racial conflict. The arbitrary treatment of the press widened still further the breach between the northern and southern provinces. The right of free discussion was expressly guaranteed by an article of the Constitution, but in practice it received scanty recognition, and heavy penalties were inflicted upon those who ventured to attack the Government's policy. This conduct, so far from silencing hostile criticism of the administration, sharpened its shafts, and an incessant agitation was carried on by Belgian writers. But no action of the Government excited deeper resentment than its financial policy. Holland had contracted an immense national debt, and the Belgian people were compelled to share half the burden. This seemed indefensible enough in the eyes of the Belgians, and the situation was not improved by the nature of the new taxes levied to meet the national deficit. One was a tax on flour, that is, on bread; the other on meat; in other words, the taxes affected the two primary necessities of life. Nothing more oppressive and injudicious could have been devised. The taxes came home to every class of the community, more especially the poor, and they served to inflame the minds of the whole nation against the supremacy of the Dutch.

1815-30

Under the influence of these various factors Belgian public opinion gradually crystallized in a form definitely antagonistic to Holland. The cleavage between north and



1830  
—  
*The  
Revolution  
of 1830.*

south steadily deepened. The two political parties of Belgium, the Clericals and the Liberals, were fused together for the moment in a national party, and minor differences were sunk in the face of the common peril. The Belgians were still loyal at heart to the Union, for the economic benefits derived from the Dutch connexion had contributed materially to the industrial development of Belgium. Their programme was, therefore, not the dissolution of the Union, but administrative autonomy. A vigorous agitation sprang up everywhere, and the public unrest was voiced in the multitude of petitions presented to the States-General. Unfortunately King William, while endowed with many excellent qualities, had an obstinate and unyielding disposition. Conscious of good intentions, and actuated by a real desire to promote the welfare of his subjects, he was not inclined to give way to the unreasoning clamour, as he thought it, of a few unruly agitators. In these circumstances the news of the French Revolution (July 1830) found the Belgians in a mood ripe for revolt. The performance of an opera at Brussels on the night of August 25 gave the signal for insurrection. The theme of the opera was the Neapolitan struggle for independence, and the crowded audience was completely swept off its feet by a wave of revolutionary passion. Without premeditation a riot ensued and rapidly assumed the proportions of a revolution. The army under the Prince of Orange was repulsed in an attempt to enter Brussels, which had been barricaded by its inhabitants, and the moral effects of this defeat were momentous. The insurrection spread like lightning over the whole country, and a provisional Government forthwith proclaimed the independence of the Belgian State. A National Congress was held on November 10, and the task of drawing up a Constitution was immediately taken in hand.

*Attitude  
of the  
Powers.*

The Powers, hitherto passive spectators, now began to bestir themselves. King William appealed to them to restore a Union established at their own instance and guaranteed by their own solemn declarations. Ten years earlier the appeal would have met with a ready response; but the international situation was no longer what it had

been in 1820. The European Confederation was now completely shattered, and Europe stood arrayed in two opposing camps. The reactionary Powers would gladly have intervened on behalf of the King of Holland to crush the Revolution; but the hands of Russia and Austria were tied by the outbreak of the Polish insurrection, and Prussia was too weak to cope single-handed with France and England. The Western Powers were thus left in possession of the field, and their sympathies were on the side of Belgium. Louis Philippe knew that it would be impossible for him to retain possession of his throne if, in defiance of French public opinion, he allowed Prussia to suppress the new Belgian State; he therefore announced his intention to resist by force of arms the coercion of Belgium. In this resolute policy he was supported by the anxiety of the British Government to avert a European war, which was recognized as inevitable if France and Prussia came into collision over the Belgian Question. A Conference of the Powers was held in London; and, as the outcome of its deliberations, the union of Holland and Belgium was dissolved, Luxemburg was restored to the House of Orange, and about half the national debt was assigned to Belgium. This settlement, called the Protocols of January, was accepted by King William, but bitterly repudiated by the Belgian National Congress. The controversy raged more particularly over the disposal of the grand duchy of Luxemburg. The duchy had been assigned to the House of Orange in 1815, in return for the sacrifice to Prussia of its ancestral territories. But Luxemburg had sent representatives to the National Congress, and the Belgians were loth to surrender their hold over it. Not only did the Belgian Assembly reject the conditions imposed upon it by the European chancelleries, but—in express defiance of their determination to exclude a French prince from the Belgian throne—it offered the crown to the Duke of Nemours, second son of the French King. It was an unpardonable offence in the eyes of the French people that Louis Philippe declined for his son the proffered dignity. He was well aware that Europe would not allow a French dynasty to rule in Belgium, and he wisely

1831 — shrank from a war which could only have one issue. Eventually a candidate acceptable to the Powers was discovered in Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, who became King of the Belgians in July 1831.

*Difficulties  
in the way  
of a settle-  
ment.*

To conciliate his new subjects, Leopold prevailed upon the Powers to modify the terms of settlement embodied in the Protocols of January. The new conditions, known as the Eighteen Articles, made valuable concessions in favour of Belgium. Luxemburg remained in Belgian possession; and, instead of an equal division of the national debt, Holland was required to discharge the liabilities she had contracted prior to the Union. This revision of the Protocols, which had been pronounced fundamental and irrevocable, gave King William a pretext for disavowing the whole settlement. He saw clearly that he would gain nothing by passive acquiescence in the decisions of the Powers, and he was burning to wipe out the stain of former reverses. At the head of 36,000 men the Prince of Orange marched into Belgium. The Belgian army, as yet almost completely unorganized, was compelled to fall back before the invaders; and Leopold's tenure of power seemed likely to be short-lived. The advance of the invaders was checked, however, by French intervention, and the Dutch, having successfully asserted the superiority of their arms, withdrew from Belgian soil. Belgium now paid the price of defeat. The Eighteen Articles were superseded by a fresh settlement (the Twenty-Four Articles), which gave to Holland as compensation Limburg and all but the Walloon, or western, portion of Luxemburg. William, who had set his heart upon regaining possession of the whole of Luxemburg, which he considered his rightful territory, persisted in his demand for better terms. There was, therefore, no alternative but to employ coercion. A French force captured Antwerp, hitherto occupied by a Dutch garrison, and the fleets of England and France blockaded the Dutch coast. Holland submitted to pressure, and suspended hostilities with the southern kingdom (1833). But the Dutch King still refused to acknowledge the independence of Belgium; and the situation was really left unchanged, for Luxemburg and



Limburg remained in Belgian hands. This condition of affairs lasted for five years, when William suddenly announced his acceptance of the Twenty-Four Articles, and demanded possession of Luxemburg and Limburg. Belgium deeply resented the enforced sacrifice, but the Powers were resolved to settle the Belgian Question once and for all, and they supported the claims of the Dutch Government. In return Holland recognized the independence of Belgium, and so the way was paved for friendly relations between the Northern and Southern Netherlands. In this manner a new sovereign State was added to the state-system of Europe, and its neutrality was placed under the solemn guarantee of the five Great Powers.<sup>1</sup>

1839  
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We have seen how the dormant sense of nationality was awakened in the Belgian people by the pressure of alien rule. The Poles were also one of the submerged nationalities of the nineteenth century, but the resurrection of Poland was delayed until the present century. In 1914 the Polish people numbered some 20 millions, of whom 5 millions were ruled by Austria, 3½ millions by Germany, and the rest by Russia. We may glance at their condition at that date in (1) Austrian Poland, (2) Prussian Poland, and (3) Russian Poland, before we turn to trace the history of the ill-starred Polish insurrections.

*The condition of the Poles in:*

(1) Nowhere in Eastern Europe was the position of the Poles so favourable as in Galicia. At the time of the *Ausgleich*<sup>2</sup> (1867), the Austrian Poles were granted a Constitution which made them to all intents and purposes autonomous. Their language was the official language of the country, and their Diet enjoyed a full measure of political power. This generous policy converted the Austrian Poles into contented subjects of the Habsburg monarchy. It was in striking contrast with the ill-considered policy which sought to repress Polish nationality in Russia and Prussia. The population of Galicia, however, was not exclusively Polish—only 53 per cent. in fact were Poles, and

*(1) Austrian Poland.*

<sup>1</sup> Luxemburg was neutralized by the Great Powers in 1867.

<sup>2</sup> *Supra*, p. 155.

1873-  
1914  
—

43 per cent. were Ruthenians. The former constituted the majority in Western Galicia, which contained the important town of Cracow; the latter, chiefly peasants, formed the majority in Eastern Galicia (Ruthenia), which included Lemberg. This ethnological division of Galicia foreshadowed yet another racial problem. In 1914 there were no less than four million Ruthenians, and the spread of education was said to be gradually awakening in them a feeling of national self-consciousness.<sup>1</sup> Austria, which subsisted largely by playing off her polyglot races one against the other, recognized the Ruthenian tongue as an official language even in schools, and also conceded the establishment of a Ruthenian University. The development of national feeling among the Ruthenians was stimulated by the fact that in language, race and religion they were akin to the Little Russians, dwelling immediately across the Russian frontier. The two halves of the Ruthenian race, Ruthenia and Little Russia, were beginning to hold out hands to each other across the barrier which separated them; and a common name, Ukraine, was coming into vogue. For the moment, the Ruthenians fixed their hopes upon the acquisition of a Diet which would liberate them from the rule of their 'Polish masters.' But they also contemplated the day when the whole Ruthenian race, comprising thirty million people, would be gathered together under the ægis of an independent Ukraine State.

(2)  
Prussian  
Poland.

(2) Prussia for forty years down to 1914 pursued in the Eastern Marches a policy of compulsory nationalization. As the Magyars of Hungary endeavoured to Magyarize all the neighbouring races, so Prussia attempted to Germanize the Poles in the Eastern Marches, the Danes in North Schleswig, and the French in Alsace-Lorraine. This policy, which originated with Bismarck, was based on the erroneous idea that the best way to consolidate an empire is to establish a dead level of uniformity. "No consideration for the Polish people," wrote Prince von Bülow, "must hinder us from doing all we can to maintain and strengthen German nationality in the former Polish domains. . . . In the struggle between nationalities, one nation is the hammer

<sup>1</sup> N. Hill, *Poland and the Polish Question* (1915), 186.

and the other is the anvil ; one is the victor and the other the vanquished." In 1873 Bismarck ordered that German should be the only language used in schools, except for religious teaching. Thirteen years later began the system of expropriating Polish landowners and importing German colonists. The result was a profound disappointment for the German Government. "As an increase in the percentage of Germans," von Bülow has admitted, "was what Bismarck aimed at, our policy and in particular the work of colonization must be considered to have failed." In less than a quarter of a century (1886-1906) the Government had settled 90,000 Germans on Polish soil, but the Polish population had risen by 200,000. The value of land also went up owing to extensive purchases of property by the Government, and the native owners reaped the benefit. At the same time the Poles, in self-defence, formed co-operative associations and set up saving and lending banks. This not only reinforced their economic powers of resistance, but it gave a stimulus to their sense of nationality. Subsequently the policy of expropriation was carried a stage further. The Government discovered that only German proprietors were willing to part with their land, and the Expropriation Law of 1909 empowered it to compel Polish landowners to sell their estates. Finally, the Law of Associations (1908) dealt yet another blow at the Polish language ; it ordered the exclusive employment of German at all public meetings other than those held during elections, except where more than 60 per cent. of the population were ignorant of German—even this concession was limited to a period of twenty years. Nevertheless, in spite of their stringency, these new provisions equally failed to achieve their end. "The Polish language," observed a German professor in 1914, "gains not only in the country districts, but in the towns as well, and even in the capital of Posen. The Polish middle class grows, while the German decreases."<sup>1</sup> These results of German policy in Prussian Poland expose the unwisdom of the view

1873-  
1914  
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<sup>1</sup> E. Barker, *The Submerged Nationalities of the German Empire* (1915), 17.



1815 — that a State is strengthened by the compulsory assimilation of its various national elements.

(3) *Russian Poland.*

(3) The condition of the Poles in Russia was very much the same as their condition in Germany ; and they objected no less to the policy of Russification than to the policy of Germanization. This policy lay at the root of Polish unrest. Russian was the language of public business and Government schools and colleges, and the country was administered by Russian officials. On more than one occasion the Poles made a strenuous bid for independence, and their struggle for freedom occupies a striking chapter in the history of the nineteenth century.

*The Polish problem and the Vienna Congress.*

The Polish problem had engaged the attention of the Vienna Congress in 1815. As a result of the three Partitions (1772-95), Russia had annexed three-fourths of Poland, and during the War of Liberation (1813-15) she also seized possession of the grand duchy of Warsaw, created by Napoleon out of the Polish territory originally assigned to Austria and Prussia. The Emperor Alexander was anxious to retain the duchy in his own hands, and undertook to restore the Kingdom of Poland under Russian suzerainty. Castlereagh feared the aggrandizement of Russia, and strenuously combated the Emperor's proposal. His policy has been severely criticized ; but, whatever its errors, it was not conceived out of want of sympathy with Polish aspirations. " I represented," he wrote of an interview with Alexander, " that most certainly the British Government would view with great satisfaction the restoration of Poland to its independence as a nation, but that they took a broad distinction between the erection of a part of Poland into a kingdom merged in the Crown of Russia, and the restoration of the whole into a distinct and independent State. . . . If the question of restoring Poland was to be stirred at all . . . *it ought to be taken up upon a broad and liberal basis.*" <sup>1</sup> From the point of view of Poland, however, this policy was a profound mistake. It was fundamentally wrong to undo the work of Napoleon and destroy once again

<sup>1</sup> Castlereagh's official despatches are printed in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Third Series, vii. 70 seq.

the unity of the Polish nation. Moreover a homogeneous Polish State, even under the dominion of Russia, would have had a greater chance of holding its own against Russian bureaucratic oppression. Instead of this, the duchy of Warsaw was broken up, and Polish territory was once again incorporated with Austria and Prussia.

Disappointed in his hope of restoring the original Polish Kingdom, Alexander yet persevered in his intention to set up a Kingdom of Poland. The new Polish Constitution was not devoid of grave defects, but in some respects it was in advance of other European Constitutions. The Crown was vested in the Emperor of Russia. The legislature consisted of two houses, a Senate and a Chamber of Deputies, the former composed of Imperial nominees, the latter containing representatives of the nobility and deputies elected under a franchise more liberal than the French. The Polish language became the official language, and civil and military appointments were confined to Polish citizens. Poland was thus erected into an autonomous State, and the nationality of the Polish people was fully recognized. The experiment, however, was a disastrous failure, though there is a conflict of opinion as to the reason. One historian ascribes its want of success to the Poles themselves "It had been always . . . the fatal weakness of the Polish national movement that it was directed in the interests of a dominant caste rather than of a whole people. . . . Clearly, had the Poles cared more for the good of their country than the privileges of their caste, they could have used the tolerable liberties conceded to them to weld together . . . a national force strong enough, if occasion should arise, to assert itself against the domination of the foreigner. But instead of trying to make the best of a not very bad bargain, the Diet proved by its attitude of indiscriminate obstruction that an organized conspiracy existed to make Russian rule impossible. The Tsar soon grew discouraged, and . . . began to take precautionary measures."<sup>1</sup> A Polish historian,<sup>2</sup>

1815  
—Alexander  
I. and  
Poland.

<sup>1</sup> Phillips, *Modern Europe*, 203.

<sup>2</sup> S. Askenazy, "Poland" in *Camb. Mod. Hist.* x. 448. Cf. also Lord Eversley, *The Partitions of Poland* (1915), 281 seq.

1815-30 — on the other hand, exonerates the Poles from blame. "The worst misfortunes which fell upon this country . . . were all due to the intervention" of Novosiltsoff, the 'evil spirit' of Poland, who poisoned Alexander's mind against the new State. One source of the trouble between Russia and the Poles was the extravagant hopes—more particularly the promise to concede the Lithuanian provinces, which had formed part of the original Polish Kingdom—which 'the coxcomb Tsar,' as Byron called him, raised without satisfying.

"The coxcomb Tsar,  
The autocrat of waltzes and of war! . . .  
Now half dissolving to a liberal thaw,  
But hardened back whene'er the morning's raw;  
With no objection to true liberty,  
Except that it would make the nations free.  
How nobly gave he back to Poles their Diet,  
Then told pugnacious Poland to be quiet."

*Breaches of  
the Con-  
stitution.*

Whatever the explanation, whether it was the intractable disposition of the Poles, or Alexander's conversion from Liberalism to the creed of Metternich, the liberties of Poland were gradually curtailed and resulted in a growing estrangement between the two countries. The first breach in the Constitution was the establishment of a censorship of newspapers and books (1819). The next step was to suspend the Diet for a period of five years (1820-25) in punishment for its outspoken criticism of the Government. Even in Alexander's lifetime the Polish Charter of Liberties appeared likely to be short-lived, and the probability developed into a certainty after the accession of Nicholas I., the inflexible opponent of all free institutions. Secret societies sprang up, and a military insurrection was on the point of breaking out as early as 1828, during the Russo-Turkish War, when the unexpected difficulties of the campaign were severely taxing Russia's resources. Two years later followed the French Revolution, and its effect upon the Poles was profound. The discovery that Nicholas intended to employ the army of Poland in a war against France decided the Polish con-

*The Polish  
insurrec-  
tion of  
1830.*



spirators to take instant action, for in the absence of the Polish army any attempt at insurrection was bound to meet with disaster. On the night of November 29, 1830, a rising took place in the capital. The movement was badly organized and could have been suppressed with the greatest ease, but the Viceroy, the Grand Duke Constantine, was seized with panic and fled from the city. Warsaw was left in the hands of the insurgents, and the revolution rapidly became general throughout Poland. A provisional Government was set up under the dictatorship of General Chlopicki, a Napoleonic veteran, who showed himself thoroughly unequal to the demands of the situation. He entered into long and fruitless negotiations with Nicholas, during which he lost an admirable opportunity for organizing the insurrection on a really effective basis. The Russian army was unprepared, and a vigorous offensive in Lithuania would not only have furnished a valuable recruiting-ground, but might have changed the fate of the whole campaign. The revolution, however, was ill-managed from the start. Its leaders were incompetent, irresolute, and divided among themselves. Meanwhile, Nicholas was pushing on his own preparations with the utmost energy, and at the beginning of February the Russian commander, Diebitsch, crossed the Polish frontier. Even yet the situation might have been retrieved, but the vacillation and dilatory tactics of the Polish generals threw away every possible chance of success. In September the Russians entered Warsaw, and a few weeks later the revolution had been stamped out in every part of the kingdom.

1830  
—

The Poles had relied upon the prospects of European intervention, but their hopes were doomed to disappointment. Prussia was unreservedly hostile. "Saved, if ever country was, by the voluntary impulse of the people, why is it that the Government of Prussia," asked Canning in 1825, "is of all Governments the most ostentatiously anti-popular in its politics?"<sup>1</sup> Austria's attitude was equivocal. Her anxiety to weaken Russia was neutralized by the fear of a Polish rising within her own borders, and, after toying

*The  
attitude  
of the  
European  
Powers.*

<sup>1</sup> Stapleton, *George Canning and his Times*, 465.

1831-55

with the idea of accepting the Crown of Poland for an Austrian archduke, she finally allowed the war to take its own course. In England and France public opinion was loud in support of the Poles, but Louis Philippe was not disposed to risk his throne in a quixotic crusade against the vast autocratic power of Russia, and the English Government adhered steadfastly to its policy of non-intervention. After the revolution had been suppressed, Palmerston remonstrated with the Russian Government against the extinction of the Polish Kingdom as a flagrant violation of the public guarantees of 1815. Nicholas, flushed by his victory over the Poles, turned a deaf ear to England's protest, and ruthlessly set to work to obliterate every vestige of Polish independence. Poland, deprived of a separate national existence, was henceforth merged in the Russian Empire. Her free institutions were abolished; the administration was flooded with Russian officials; the Russian tongue was erected into the official language of the country; and the army was incorporated with the Russian imperial forces.

*Parties in Poland.*

The policy of Russification was carried on with relentless vigour for a quarter of a century. With the accession of Alexander II., however, the dawn of a new era seemed at hand. The oppressive rigour of the Government was immediately relaxed; the exiles of 1831 were recalled from banishment; and the national movement, which had received a powerful stimulus from the Crimean War, once more reared its head. The Poles were divided into two sections, the 'Reds' and the 'Whites.' The former—the Polish Revolutionary party—felt for Russia the deepest hatred, for in their eyes she was the cause of all the woes of Poland. The latter—the Conservative party—were willing to effect a reconciliation with Russia on the basis of the Constitution of 1815. Outside these parties, there was a handful of politicians whose programme was more modest in its aspirations, but at the same time infinitely more practical. Their representative was the Marquis Wielopolski, whose influence prevailed with Alexander II. to adopt a policy of conciliation. Wielopolski was appointed head of the civil administration,

to collapse in ruins. There were two revolutions, though perhaps it would be more correct to say that there was a single revolution which developed two phases. The political phase or March Revolution occurred in March 1917, and it sealed the fate of the autocracy; the social phase or November (Bolshevik) Revolution followed in November 1917,<sup>1</sup> and it brought into existence the first Workers' Republic.

The March Revolution was not the outcome of a carefully engineered plot. Its spontaneous character is shown by the fact that even revolutionary circles were unprepared, for (as an eye-witness wrote) "the revolution found them sleeping, like the foolish virgins." The immediate occasion was the public discontent over the shortage of food. The bread queues gave rise to strikes and disturbances, which swiftly and unexpectedly broadened into an insurrection directed against the war and against the monarchy—for the suffering entailed by economic hardships was aggravated by the impotence of the autocracy to prosecute successfully the war against Germany and Austria-Hungary. On March 8 (1917) the women textile workers in Petrograd came out on strike with a demand for food. The next day they were joined by other workers, with whose cry of 'Bread!' were now mingled the ominous cries of 'Down with the war!', 'Down with the autocracy!' The third day the outbreak began to wear the aspect of a general strike and to manifest revolutionary tendencies: it had brought to the surface all the repressed elements which awaited the opportunity to assert themselves. A police report stated that the masses, encouraged by the attitude of the military, felt a sense of immunity. At first the garrison remained neutral but soon it proceeded to fraternize with the insurgents; some of the regiments mutinied and openly adhered to the side of the demonstrators. Five days later (March 15) the revolutionary ferment attained its climax when the Czar Nicholas II—enmeshed in a tangled web whose strands had been woven partly by circumstances

*The March Revolution.*

<sup>1</sup> The old Russian calendar was thirteen days behind the international (and the present Russian) calendar. According to the former the first revolution occurred in February, and the second in October.



which he could not control, and partly by his own weak personality—~~abdicated~~ the throne.<sup>1</sup> The monarchy was abolished and in its place a Provisional Government was set up. Petrograd played in the Russian Revolution the part which Paris had assumed in the French Revolution, and the country accepted without demur the situation created by events in the capital. Another striking resemblance emerges between the Russian and French Revolutions. The power was won by the workers but they at once resigned it to the middle class. The paradox is doubtless explained by the fact that they did not feel strong enough to hold it; the attitude of the army at the front was still uncertain, and a Government appointed by the *Duma* (parliament) appeared a guarantee against a counter-revolution.

The  
Soviets

Although the March Revolution placed authority in the hands of the Liberal elements among the *bourgeoisie*, they could only maintain their position with the support of the moderate Socialists. The workers, while they refrained from taking over the government of the country, actually controlled it through the agency of the soviets. This institution came into existence during the revolutionary episode of 1905, when the leaders of the general strike formed a body known as the soviet of workers' deputies. The soviets of the March Revolution contained representatives of the soldiers as well as of the workers, in recognition of their 'benevolent neutrality' which had given the victory to the insurgents. The erection of the soviet system by the side of the Provisional Government created in effect a divided allegiance; and it drove a fatal wedge between those who held office and those who held power. As a result the authority of the *bourgeois* ministry was impaired at the outset, and it remained throughout its brief and inglorious career a Government on sufferance. One achievement stands to its credit. It placed all the races and nationalities within the ambit of the Russian Empire on a level of equality; in particular, it removed the disabilities of the Jewish people comprised in a code which is said to have imposed more than six hundred legal restrictions. But it failed

Soviets of  
Russia

<sup>1</sup> He was murdered with his family in July 1918.

signally to find a solution for the problems which had already wrecked the autocracy, and within a few months encompassed also the destruction of its *bourgeois* successor. These problems centred around the war, the demand of the peasants for the land, and the revolutionary temper of the industrial workers.

Russia's losses in the war of 1914-18 exceeded those of any other belligerent, and disease claimed even more victims than the bayonet and the machine gun. Nor did victories in the field compensate her for the immense casualties which she sustained. On the contrary she encountered only defeats, for—as a Russian general confessed—"the present-day demands of military technique are beyond us." The Western Powers helped to repair her deficiencies in military equipment, but a defective system of transportation handicapped the rapid movement of men, munitions and food-stuffs to all parts of the front. <sup>Problem of the war.</sup> The economic backwardness of Russia neutralized the advantages which she enjoyed over the enemy in man-power and natural resources, and reduced her largely to impotence. It is hardly surprising therefore that the soldiers suffered from war-weariness, that desertions occurred *en masse*, and that "whole units refused to fight." An officer wrote: "Nobody wanted to fight any more, all their thoughts were for one thing only—peace." This demoralization, as all contemporary accounts testify, was not the outcome of the revolution but contributed to precipitate it. According to the president of the *Duma*, "the ground for the final disintegration of the army was prepared long before the revolution." His statement lends colour to the view held by many Russians that a separate peace would probably have been concluded even if there had been no political upheaval. The overthrow of the ruling clique revived for a moment the flagging enthusiasm of the nation, and the Provisional Government undertook to prosecute the war with renewed ardour.<sup>1</sup> There was,

<sup>1</sup> The famous 'Prikaz' (Order) No. 1 of March 1917 authorized officers and men in the army to elect committees, but it also insisted that "in the execution of their service-duties soldiers must maintain the strictest military discipline." Its authors stated that it applied exclusively to the Petrograd garrison (A. F. Kerensky, *The Catastrophe*), but in the opinion of the commander-in-chief it became "the last nail in the coffin of the army" (P. Miliukov, *Bolshevism*).

✓ however, a strong reaction against the policy of annexations; and Miliukov (the minister for foreign affairs), who favoured the acquisition of Constantinople, was forced to resign.

✓ The moderate Socialists entered the cabinet, which now became a coalition ministry (May 1917). Kerensky was appointed minister of war, and he proceeded to the front in order to stir up the soldiers to renew the offensive. It was resumed in July; but its complete failure ruined the prestige of the Government of which Kerensky had become the head, and inaugurated the second phase of the revolution. The popular opposition to the war was intensified; and in the Bolsheviks' advocacy of peace lay a vital cause of the success with which their skilful propaganda was soon to be crowned. With it was combined another factor no less persuasive in its appeal—the undertaking to give the land to the peasants.

*Problem of  
the land*

We have shown in a previous chapter how the Russian peasantry felt a keen sense of injustice at the terms of the emancipation settlement, which freed them from serfdom but required them to pay compensation to the landlords for the loss of their labour rights. They claimed that the release of the landlords from their military obligations in the eighteenth century should have automatically absolved the serfs from their predial obligations, which as tillers of the soil they owed to the defenders of the soil. They therefore resented the imposition of pecuniary burdens in lieu of labour burdens as a violation of an implied contract. The exaction of these 'redemption payments', as they were termed, was maintained down to 1907. ✓ Moreover, the peasants were often assigned less land than they had previously occupied, and they attributed their depressed condition to the scanty area of their farms. ✓ The situation was aggravated by their inability to make the best use of the soil which they occupied. The system of cultivation in Russia was backward, and the peasants lacked the capital and technique to raise it to a higher level through adopting the methods of intensive farming. ✓ The scope for individual enterprise was further restricted by the system of land ownership which was vested in the *mir* (village community), by the intermixture of strips into which many of the holdings



were divided, and by the status of the peasant household as the legal representative of its members in all property relations.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, in the view of the peasants, the root cause of all their difficulties was the shortage of land; and they cast hungry eyes upon the estates of the large landowners, which seemed ready like ripe fruit to fall into their outstretched hands. Their demand for a fresh distribution of the land was being pressed long before the revolution, and it constituted a "latent Socialism without a doctrine." To satisfy the cravings of the more ambitious peasants, Stolýpin's reform enacted in 1906 had empowered even a minority of peasants in any village community to ask that their share of the communal land should be taken out of communal control and assigned to them in individual ownership. The purpose of the law was to promote the development of a class of capitalist farmers (*kulaks*), springing up from the ranks of the peasantry, who could buy out the proprietors of the land which was independently owned. It produced however another consequence, for it created the counterpart of a rural capitalist class, namely, a rural proletariat consisting of those who had sold their land. This rural proletariat served as a focus of disaffection; and its opportunity came with the fall of the monarchy, the guardian of all vested interests.

In a revolutionary movement all the elements which are stirred into activity by the popular commotion interpret the course of events in the light of their own aspirations and ambitions. To the soldiers the Russian Revolution spelt peace; to the urban proletariat it spelt, if not the abolition, at any rate the control of capitalism; and to the peasantry it spelt land. The *bourgeois* Government disappointed all these expectations. (Instead of peace it ordered a renewal of the offensive; instead of Socialism it co-operated with the forces of capitalism; instead of giving the land to the peasants it pursued a policy of procrastination.) The peasants began with increasing boldness to take matters into their own

*The  
agrarian  
terror.*

<sup>1</sup> "The bulk of the peasants lived under a system of Communism." The Emancipation Act vested the right to a share of allotment land in the family, and there were "no goods that a male member could call his own"; M. T. Florinsky, *The End of the Russian Empire*.

hands. Sometimes they seized the estates of the landlords, burned manor-houses, and even murdered the proprietors and overseers. "With revolutionary barbarism", confessed one of the Bolshevik leaders, the peasants were "wiping out the barbarism of the Middle Ages." The agrarian terror fostered throughout Russia a sense of instability, which combined with other factors to deepen the prevailing distrust of the Government. When the Russian peasantry lost confidence that the regime established by the March Revolution would solve the agrarian problem as they demanded, the ground was prepared for the insidious propaganda of the Bolshevik emissaries. In order to obtain the land the peasants made common cause with the industrial workers, and acquiesced in the overthrow of the *bourgeoisie*.

Problem of  
the prole-  
tariat.

The revolutionary temper of the urban workers, already disclosed in the general strike of 1905, is attributed by a Russian writer<sup>1</sup> to the origin of the proletariat and the nature of the industrial structure. The proletariat was not the product of a gradual evolution. Owing to the rapid development of industry under the stimulus of foreign capital, its personnel was continuously recruited from the rural population; and the 'link' of the factory with the land is shown by the frequency with which the families of the operatives remained behind in the villages. Hence in Russia the proletariat did not undergo the social discipline of mediæval apprenticeship, as it did in England, nor did it inherit the steadying traditions of the mediæval guilds. "It was thrown into the factory cauldron snatched directly from the plough." Their abrupt divorce from the soil, coupled with their isolation from the educated classes, served to make Russian workers 'hospitable to revolutionary thought.' It explained their 'revolutionary freshness' and ability to create the first Labour Republic; though these qualities were off-set by "illiteracy, backwardness, absence of organizational habits, absence of system in labour, of cultural and technical education." It may be observed that a class similar in origin and in outlook was to be found in the

<sup>1</sup> L. Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution* (translated by M. Eastman).

North of England a century ago, and it formed the backbone of the militant Chartist movement. Moreover, "Russian industry in its technique and capitalist structure stood at the level of the advanced countries and even outstripped them in some respects. Small enterprises, involving less than one hundred workers, employed in the United States (in 1914) 35 per cent. of the industrial workers but in Russia only 17·8 per cent. The percentage for enterprises with a hundred to a thousand workers was approximately identical. But the giant enterprises, above a thousand workers each, employed in the United States 17·8 per cent. of the workers and in Russia 41·4 per cent. The extreme concentration of industry meant that there were no transitional layers between the capitalists and the masses."<sup>1</sup>

This analysis of Russian society will have served to show that it contained all the explosive elements needed for a social upheaval: war-weary soldiers, clamorous peasants, and a proletariat which felt that it had nothing to lose but its chains. It was the task assumed by the Bolshevik party to weld together these chaotic elements, and make of them an instrument—forged in the white heat of its own burning fanaticism—for the institution of a Workers' Republic. The Bolsheviks had broken away from the Mensheviks. The latter were moderate Socialists; they held that the working class should unite with the middle class to set up a democratic State; and they supported the *bourgeois* regime which superseded the autocracy. The former were opposed to any compromise with the middle class; they rejected completely the economic and social system which it represented; and they advocated the union of the working class with the poorer peasants in order to establish a Workers' Republic based on the 'dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.' When the March Revolution broke out the head of the Bolshevik party, Vladimir Lenin, was in Switzerland; and in his absence the Bolshevik leaders in

*The Bolsheviks.*

<sup>1</sup> Trotsky, *op. cit.* According to the figures given in M. T. Florinsky, *The End of the Russian Empire*, industrial enterprises employed over 2½ million workers—5 per cent. (each with over 500 workers) employed over half the workers; 15 per cent. (each with 101–500 workers) over one-quarter; 80 per cent. (each with 1–100 workers) less than one-fifth.



Russia gave utterance to less extreme views. Their organ declared: "Of course there is no question among us of the downfall of the rule of capital but only of the downfall of the rule of autocracy and feudalism"—that is, the power of the czar and the landlords. With Lenin's arrival in April 1917, after travelling through Germany in a 'sealed train', the situation was transformed; the possibilities of a peaceful liquidation of the problems inherited from the czarist regime grew fainter; the atmosphere of the capital became increasingly tense; and all the portents of an approaching storm darkened the horizon. Trotsky has said of Lenin that he "became the unqualified leader of the most revolutionary party in the world's history, because his thought and will were really equal to the demands of the gigantic revolutionary possibilities of the country and the epoch." He added: "The role of personality arises before us here on a truly gigantic scale. It is necessary only to understand that role correctly, taking personality as a link in the historic chain." In other words, without Lenin the Bolshevik party "might have let slip the revolutionary opportunity for many years." It was Russia's destiny that the man and the occasion should present themselves at the same moment.

Lenin's  
views.

Lenin at once announced his views with implacable determination. He declared: "We don't need any parliamentary republic. We don't need any *bourgeois* democracy. We don't need any government except the soviet of workers', soldiers' and farmhands' deputies." The first phase of the revolution had given the power to the middle class; it was necessary to prepare immediately for the second phase "which must give the power to the proletariat and the poor layers of the peasantry." The '*bourgeois-democratic*' revolution must be converted into a 'Socialist' revolution, in which both landlords and capitalists would be expropriated. Lenin's programme at that time, wrote a contemporary, "seemed to everybody absurd and fantastic." It failed to evoke a favourable response among the other leaders of his own party. Their minds, impregnated with the Marxian interpretation of History, visualized

a rigid sequence of economic and political stages in social development. ✓ Lenin's proposal of an abrupt transition from a feudal to a Socialist society, and from autocracy to a 'dictatorship of the proletariat', eliminated at a stroke two historic stages—capitalism and democracy; and it appeared in the eyes of his followers an incalculable leap in the dark. Nevertheless the current of events was flowing in a predestined direction with an irresistible momentum; and the Bolsheviks flowed with the current. On the two vital issues of the day, land and peace, they alone defined their policy with precision and clarity. ✓ "We favour", said Lenin, "an immediate transfer of the land to the peasants", and with this was coupled an undertaking to end the war. In a country which was preponderantly agricultural, the attitude of the peasantry proved the decisive element in determining the fate of the revolution; and the Bolsheviks owed their triumph primarily to their recognition of the fact that the crux of the revolution was the agrarian question. ✓ One of their leaders has stressed the view that the proletariat could not possibly have come into power in 1917 if the *bourgeoisie* had coped successfully with the land problem. It is equally true that the peasants alone would have been impotent to overcome the resistance of the *bourgeoisie*. The Bolsheviks established a common front between the peasantry and the proletariat against the middle class; and their momentary union—based upon a temporary identity of interests—accomplished its dual purpose of giving the land to the rural workers and political power to the urban workers. This helps to explain a noteworthy contrast between the Russian and the French Revolutions. In France the middle class ensured its survival by satisfying the demands of the peasants, who thus became converted into the most conservative bulwark of the social and political fabric. In Russia the influence of the landlords was strong enough to postpone the concessions which might have saved the old order from complete annihilation. The 'dictatorship of the proletariat' was the logical consequence of the reluctance of the Russian *bourgeoisie* to broaden the basis of the revolution and enlist the support of the peasants in the

struggle with the industrial workers. Political inexperience kept its eyes closed to the age-old maxim of government: 'divide and rule.'

*Bolshevik  
propa-  
ganda.*

The ease with which the *bourgeois* regime succumbed to the hostility of its enemies came as a surprise to those who measured the significance of the Bolshevik party by the exiguous resources which it commanded. Its leading organ had only a limited circulation; its funds were small; the intelligentsia mostly held aloof. These deficiencies were more than compensated for by skilful propaganda, for its slogans—'Peace! Land! Bread!'—distilled the very essence of the popular cravings. In propagating their political ideas the Bolshevik emissaries displayed unstinted energy. "They worked zealously and unceasingly", wrote a Menshevik opponent; "they were among the masses, in the factories, every day and all the time." Above all, the Bolsheviks knew what they wanted. "They knew", said Miliukov, "where they were going, and they went in the direction which they had chosen once for all." While the Bolsheviks made headway, the constituted authorities steadily lost ground; a prey to inertia they did not govern, they drifted. "The *bourgeois* republic", again to quote Miliukov, "defended only by Socialists of moderate tendencies, finding no longer any support in the masses, could not maintain itself." Meanwhile the internal situation in regard to food conditions, industrial production and transport, continued to deteriorate. The semi-starvation of the populace made it more responsive to agitation; industry suffered from want of raw materials; and the system of transport was hopelessly inadequate. In this economic collapse the Bolsheviks discerned their opportunity to establish themselves in the seat of government. They made two attempts at insurrection. The first, which may have been in the nature of a *ballon d'essai*, was a complete fiasco. In July an armed demonstration took place, and its futility strengthened the impression that the Bolshevik menade had been exaggerated. The Government was encouraged to adopt a policy of repression; the Bolshevik movement was proscribed; its leaders either went into



hiding as in the case of Lenin, or were arrested as in the instance of Trotsky. The apparent removal of the Bolshevik peril provided an opportunity in the month of September for another outbreak, in which the army chiefs sought to take the reins into their own hands. The *coup d'état* of General Kornilov, the commander-in-chief, was checked without bloodshed, but it made a great sensation and was commonly interpreted as an attempt at a counter-revolution. Hence the failure of the military conspiracy, instead of fortifying the ministry which was believed to have played a somewhat ambiguous role, served to deepen the distrust of the masses and drive them still further towards the Left. The consequences of the Kornilov episode now began to unfold themselves. Leon Trotsky, who had arrived from America two months after the outbreak of the revolution and had joined the Bolshevik party, was released from prison by the Government, which may have felt the need of placating the Left wing by a conciliatory gesture. However this may be, it was Trotsky who (in the words of the official Soviet record) "organized and led" the November insurrection in his capacity as president of the Petrograd soviet. A signal victory was gained by the Bolsheviks when they secured a majority in the soviets of Petrograd and Moscow. The alienation of the masses was a tangible sign that the existing regime had forfeited popular support. This significant event was acclaimed by Lenin as an indication that "our day is come"; and he urged that the Bolsheviks "should seize the State power in their hands." Lenin encountered considerable opposition among his followers when he pressed for immediate action. His critics admitted that the Bolshevik party might 'seize the State power' in the two capitals, but they believed that it would not be able to maintain itself in the provinces. Their argument drew from Lenin the retort: "The dictatorship would give land to the peasants. How can you doubt that the peasants would support that dictatorship?" Lenin's views prevailed over the misgivings of his opponents who feared that a second attempt at insurrection might prove as abortive as the first.

The  
November  
Revolution.

At this distance of time it is astonishing to observe the almost trivial means employed to accomplish a revolution, that was destined to have such incalculable consequences for a nation which now approaches 200 millions. The Bolshevik leaders had at their disposal the 'Red guard', consisting of armed workers who numbered about twenty-five thousand. A half-trained force could not have held out against disciplined troops; and the decisive factor in the situation was the attitude of the Petrograd garrison, which feared its transfer to the front and was won over by Bolshevik propaganda. The *bourgeois* regime found itself bereft of its defenders, and it hardly made even a show of resistance. Its isolation, rather than the resources of its adversaries, was the cause of its downfall. At two o'clock in the morning on November 7, 1917, the Bolsheviks set in motion the wheels of revolution. Small armed detachments occupied the railway stations, the State bank, the telephone exchange, the post office and other government buildings. The insurrection pursued in the main an orderly method. There was a marked absence of the conventional trappings of revolution, such as street demonstrations and disorders, perhaps owing to the fact that in general no resistance was offered to the seizure of government offices. Trotsky, in making his report to the Petrograd soviet, said: "They told us that an insurrection would drown the revolution in torrents of blood. We do not know of a single casualty. There is no example in History of a revolutionary movement involving such gigantic masses being so bloodless." Thus spoke the organizer of revolution in the hour of victory; but the cost of a revolution cannot be measured until it has completely run its course, for the scourge of civil war often follows in its wake. Many years later, in his capacity as historian of the Russian Revolution, Trotsky demonstrated the price of the Bolshevik victory in these terms: "Hundreds of thousands of people were buried, the South and East of Russia were pillaged and laid waste, the industry of the country was almost completely destroyed, and the Red Terror imposed upon the revolution."

The programme of the newly-constituted Government was announced forthwith by Lenin in a series of decrees. One was a proposal "to all warring peoples and their rulers to begin at once negotiations leading to a just and democratic peace" without annexations and without indemnities (November 8, 1917). The rejection of this offer caused Russia to withdraw from the war, and accept the terms laid upon her by the victorious might of Germany in the capitulation of Brest-Litovsk (1918). Another decree declared that "the landlord's property in the land is annulled immediately, and without any indemnity whatever." The confiscation of the large estates swung the peasantry over to the side of the Bolsheviks, and provided the surest guarantee against a counter-revolution. The stage was thus set for the complete extirpation of the old order. The Bolsheviks had taken to heart the explanation assigned by Karl Marx for the collapse of the revolution in Germany<sup>1</sup> in 1848—that it displaced only ministers of state, while leaving the administration in the hands of bureaucrats, judges and army officers, who had been trained in the old traditions. Accordingly they proceeded to destroy root and branch the czarist machinery of government, and to replace it by a widely-different system based on councils of delegates (soviets) who represented the workers and peasants. In this way a 'Workers' and Peasants' State' was established, and a new officialdom was created to carry on the administration.

*Pro-  
gramme  
of the  
Bolshevik  
Govern-  
ment.*

For the first three years of its existence the Soviet regime had to fight for its life, since the easy victory achieved by the Bolsheviks in wresting the State power from the nerveless hands of their adversaries was followed by a struggle which involved the nation in all the horrors of a civil war. The dispossessed classes did not accept passively the verdict of the November Revolution, and with the support of the Allied Powers they organized armed resistance under General Denikin in the South and Admiral Kolchak in Siberia. Exposed to the bitterness of fratricidal strife, Russia became a prey to the 'Red Terror' of the revolu-

*Civil war*

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 58.



tion and the 'White Terror' of the counter-revolution with their savage reprisals and atrocities; while the misery of her people was exacerbated by famine. The ultimate triumph of the Soviet Government, after numerous reverses, was due to various causes. One was the support of the peasants, who feared the return of the landlords. Another was the immense size of the country, which enabled the Bolsheviks to protract the war until they had mustered their full strength. Under the leadership of Trotsky the Red army was created; and the swiftness with which this formidable fighting machine was improvised invites comparison with the training of Cromwell's Ironsides and the French revolutionary armies. The third reason for the collapse of the anti-Bolshevik movement was the excesses of the White armies, which caused the population (as one of the leaders confessed) "to endure the horrors of pillage, violence and despotism all over again." The fourth reason was that the presence of foreign troops on Russian soil rallied the patriotic elements in the country to the side of the constituted Government. Finally, the pressure of the workers in other countries was largely instrumental in putting an end to foreign intervention. Poland took advantage of Russia's internal difficulties to make war upon her former oppressor (1919), but her temerity brought her to the verge of destruction. No sooner had the Red army stamped out the civil war at home than it turned upon the Poles and advanced to the outskirts of Warsaw. Here it was thrown back, and the Treaty of Riga concluded in 1920 between the two countries gave Poland a far more favourable eastern frontier than that contemplated by the peace conference at Paris in 1919. The Bolsheviks professed belief in the right of self-determination, and agreed to the secession of the subject nationalities. They yielded up Russian Poland to the resurrected Polish republic, and the border provinces were erected into independent Baltic States—namely, Finland, Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia.

*World  
revolution.*

In the eyes of the Bolshevik leaders the Russian Revolution was only the beginning of a series of national revolutions. Lenin confidently anticipated that the war of 1914-18 would

encompass the destruction of capitalist society in Western countries. "That there will be a Socialist revolution in Europe", he said in 1918, "is in the nature of a scientific prediction"; and he proclaimed his conviction that "we stand in the vestibule of the world-wide proletarian revolution." In preparation for the world revolution the Comintern or Third (Communist) International was created in 1919 as an association of the Communist parties of all lands.<sup>1</sup> The first article of its 'statute' defined its objectives: "The New International Brotherhood of Workers is founded for the joint action of the proletarians of various countries, who in common aim to overthrow capitalism, and establish the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' and the international Soviet republic for the destruction of class society and the introduction of Socialism, that first stage of Communist society." Its president, Zinoviev, announced in 1919 that "in a year the whole of Europe will be Communist." These hopes of an international revolution were doomed to disappointment, for even in the countries which had suffered defeat in the war of 1914-18 the social structure was too deeply rooted to succumb to the revolutionary ferment. The ease with which the Russian proletariat had wrested the State power was due, in reality, to a complex of factors which were peculiar to Russia—the exceptional weakness of the *bourgeoisie* which made scarcely a show of resistance; the adhesion of the peasants who allied themselves with the proletariat in order to obtain the land; the extreme bitterness of class feeling due to the gulf between the various social strata; and the vast extent of territory which enabled the revolutionary Government to hold out against foreign intervention and domestic insurrections. At the moment however the larger aims of the Bolshevik leaders, as embodied in the Comintern, produced a wave of panic in other States. Anxiety lest the example of a Workers' Republic might have an unsettling effect on their own class-conscious masses deepened into consternation when it became the avowed object of the Bolshevik regime

<sup>1</sup> The First International Working Men's Association existed from 1864-76. The Second was formed in 1889.

to promote a world-wide revolutionary conflagration. The danger proved exaggerated. The energies of the Soviet Union were fully absorbed in the task of putting its own house in order; and its position, menaced by famine and counter-revolution, was too precarious to embark upon the hazardous undertaking of setting fire to the houses of its neighbours.

*Trotsky's  
views.*

The failure of the world revolution to materialize confronted the Bolshevik leaders with an issue which shattered the unity of the party. The schism occurred after Lenin's death in 1924 had removed the unquestioned leader of the Bolshevik movement. The cleavage which developed among his followers was in part the reflection of personal rivalries and jealousies, but it assumed an ideological character based on a doctrinal issue. One wing, the majority, was led by Joseph Stalin; the other wing (the Left opposition), the minority, derived its inspiration from Trotsky. The question involved was whether the Soviet Union should persist in its endeavours to incite revolutions in other countries, or whether it should concentrate its efforts on building up a national Socialist society. Trotsky's advocacy of a world revolution was based on three propositions. The first denied that an isolated Socialist State could permanently survive in a capitalist environment, in view of the danger of military intervention or economic boycott. The second asserted that conditions in Russia were not yet ripe for Socialism, because of her economic backwardness, low cultural level, and the divergent interests of a *bourgeois* peasantry. The third held that "the problem of Socialist revolution is international in essence", since the interdependence of nations involves a world market and a world-wide division of labour, and so precludes the possibility of creating a 'shut-in' Socialist society in complete contrast with all other national systems. In this connexion Trotsky advanced the famous theory of 'Permanent Revolution'—that the revolution in Russia must be conceived as the first link in a chain of national revolutions. His theory was the logical outcome of his economic interpretation of History. He believed that the purpose of the *bourgeois* revolutions had been to



abolish feudal privileges, and replace the 'particularism of the provinces' by a national market open to the productive forces of the whole country. In contrast, the purpose of a proletarian revolution would be to abolish private ownership of the means of production, and replace a national economy by a world economy based upon an international division of labour and open to the productive forces of mankind.

In opposition to the theory of 'Permanent Revolution', Stalin advanced the doctrine of 'Socialism in a single country.' His doctrine implied that in default of a world revolution Soviet Russia should establish a Socialist commonwealth in order to provide an example of Socialism in practice; its success would be the best guarantee of its imitation. He claimed that the Soviet Union could reconstruct the national economy by its own efforts, and that an independent Socialist society would survive without revolutions in other lands. The new orientation of policy involved the virtual abandonment of the Comintern, for it induced the Soviet Government to cultivate pacific relations with capitalist countries, whose help was needed to supply the Workers' Republic with machinery, raw materials and technical experts. In the conflict provoked by the clash of contending theories the victory rested with Stalin, whose control of the party machine enabled him to draw the reins of power into his own hands. Trotsky was sent into exile in 1929; the adherents of his principles were proscribed and ruthlessly put to death; and the doctrine of 'Trotskyism' was officially condemned as incompatible with 'Bolshevism.' The future alone can disclose whether the methods of terrorism will succeed in stabilizing the existing regime and in stamping out the smouldering embers of the opposition; but a spirit of unrest broods over Soviet Russia and retards her political pacification. After two decades the Russian Revolution is still in progress, and it continues with increasing bitterness to devour its children. The sinister activities of the dreaded *Tcheka* (later *Ogpu*) or political police with its network of spies, secret tribunals and summary executions, created a reign of terror which

demanded always fresh victims. Repeated 'purges'—the execution of highly-placed officials, generals and diplomats—make it impossible for the world to forget the cruelties which have stained the course of the Russian Revolution.<sup>1</sup>

*'New  
Economic  
Policy.'*

The economic structure of the Soviet State, as it emerged from the experiment of 'War Communism' and the subsequent transformation accomplished within later years, can now be viewed in an historical perspective. The first phase of the reconstruction of the national economy on a Socialist basis was coloured by the exigencies of the civil war, which inaugurated a period of 'War Communism' (1918-21)—the counterpart of 'War Socialism' in Western Europe. The State took over the apparatus of industrial production and exchange, and extinguished independent enterprise by the nationalization of the factories and the prohibition of private retail trade; the banks disappeared; money wages were superseded by commodity cards for necessities, free domicile, and free transport; agriculture itself was exempted from the socializing process, but the crops of the peasants were requisitioned. An alarming decline in production, together with peasant outbreaks and a revolt of the sailors in the Soviet fleet, forced Lenin in 1921 to adopt the 'New Economic Policy.' This was a retreat to capitalism that "we may be able to regroup our forces and then resume the offensive." The peasants were allowed to sell their produce in open market; the retail traders resumed their buying and selling for profit; individual enterprise in small-scale manufactures was tolerated; the banking and credit system was restored; the use of money was revived for the payment of wages, rents, railway fares, etc.; State industries were conceded a large measure of autonomy, and required to conduct their business on a money basis and in accordance with the principles of accountancy. The State retained in its hands foreign trade, banks, mines, forests, railways, and the heavy industries; while the

<sup>1</sup> Concentration camps were instituted, where those who incurred suspicion as 'counter-revolutionaries' were put to hard labour under inhuman conditions.

political ascendancy of the working class was considered a guarantee against class exploitation in the limited spheres now opened up to private enterprise. The concessions made to individual initiative were intended only as a provisional measure; and in the course of the decade 1921-31, as will be seen, the development of State organs of production and exchange made it possible gradually to 'liquidate' the *Nepmen* (retail traders and small manufacturers) and *kulaks* ('rich' peasants), thus completing the process which had already 'liquidated' the capitalists and landlords in other branches of the national economy. To the analysis of this historical process we must now turn.

The most momentous change produced by the Bolshevik seizure of power was in the sphere of agriculture, for it affected the largest section of the population. Two agrarian revolutions must be distinguished—the one expropriated the landlords, and the other substituted collective farms for individual peasant holdings. The former was achieved with a stroke of the pen. A decree issued by the Government nationalized the land, and established the principle that it should be distributed among the cultivators of the soil. In effect the decree implied that private ownership of the land was abolished but the land itself remained in private possession. The expropriation of the landlord did not mean that the whole of his estate became available for distribution, since part of it was already held by peasants on payment of rent (as in France before the Revolution of 1789), and a part was sometimes converted into a State farm. Altogether the partition of the great estates extended the cultivated area in the hands of the peasantry by roughly one-third. Nevertheless their position was not materially improved. Owing to the growth of population and the inclusion of landless peasants, the number of holdings expanded within a decade (1918-28) from 16 to 25 millions; hence in spite of the increase in the total acreage the individual farms remained extremely minute. It is estimated that the sown area averaged eleven acres per holding, though some farms contained thirty to forty acres. Thus the first agrarian revolution broke up the private estates,



relieved tenants of the obligation to pay rent to the dispossessed owners, and provided holdings for the landless—but it did not appease the 'land hunger' of those who craved for larger farms.

*Condition  
of the  
peasants.*

In other respects the condition of the peasants after the Bolshevik Revolution greatly deteriorated. During the civil war their grain was requisitioned to feed the armies on both sides. The peasants retaliated by diminishing the sown area, and in 1921 the harvest was only two-fifths of the normal crop. A famine ensued, and the Government was driven to abandon (1921) the system under which it took from the farmer at its own price the whole of his grain beyond the minimum required for food and seed-corn. Instead of virtual confiscation, the peasants paid a fixed tax in grain and were allowed to dispose of the surplus in the open market. The conservatism of the peasantry had triumphed over the social theories of Bolshevism, and for a decade agriculture—in conspicuous contrast with the socialized industry—was conducted on individualist lines as in capitalist countries. "Let the peasants themselves", resolved Lenin, "decide all questions and build their own life." Within a decade the peasantry ceased to enjoy this liberty when Lenin's successor forced upon them the compulsory collectivization of the land. Meanwhile the return to economic orthodoxy alleviated the situation, although it did not remove another grievance of the peasants, namely, the reduction in their purchasing power due to the disparity between the prices of agricultural products and manufactured articles. This was a world-wide phenomenon, but in Russia it was accentuated by the scarcity of commodities arising from the concentration of the national resources on capital construction work. The 'gap' between agricultural and industrial prices, which was termed 'the scissors', meant that the peasants received fewer goods in exchange for their grain. A *mujik* (peasant) is quoted as saying: "The soviets did give me land, but what shall I do with it? Can I eat land? I have no horse, and what can I do on land without a horse? In the old days we had a czar, landlords, exploiters, and yet I could always buy

a horse if mine died, and boots too, and all the calico I could pay for. And now there is no czar, there are no landlords, there are no exploiters, and yet—no horse, no boots, no calico, nothing.”<sup>1</sup> The peasants met the situation by curtailing production, which in the event of a drought meant a famine.

The first agrarian revolution, which gave the land into the occupation of the peasants, had resulted in a deadlock between the villages and the towns, between the interests of the farmers and those of the industrialized Soviet State. It was succeeded a decade later by the second agrarian revolution, which ended the deadlock by taking away the land from the individual peasant and entrusting it to the group. The change of policy was actuated by a dual motive. Many of the Communist leaders feared the growth of a new *bourgeoisie*, composed of relatively well-to-do farmers creating anew the ideology of a capitalist society, and whose existence in a country predominantly agricultural would refute its claim to be considered a Socialist commonwealth. Those peasants who were in some degree better off than their neighbours were labelled exploiters, and a relentless class warfare was instituted to suppress the so-called ‘rich’ peasants (*kulaks*), who were stigmatized as the “capitalist elements in the villages.” One of the main issues in the conflict between the Stalin and Trotsky factions was the demand of the latter for the repression of individual farming—a demand which Stalin at first resisted in the belief that it would diminish agricultural production. After Trotsky’s downfall, however, he suddenly reversed his attitude in consequence of an acute shortage, which in 1928 forced the Government to import grain and introduce food rationing. The shrinkage in production was interpreted to mean that Russian peasant agriculture was unequal to the task of feeding the urban masses of Soviet Russia, and of supplying the means whereby to import machinery and raw materials in exchange for grain. Formerly the great estates had provided a large marketable surplus, which made Russia one of the corn granaries of the world.

<sup>1</sup> M. Hindus, *Humanity Uprooted*.

This ceased when the estates were partitioned, and it soon became imperative to revive large-scale methods of farming such as the use of machinery, fertilizers, rotation of crops, and a superior technique — all of which were beyond the resources of peasant holdings. The latter were minute in area and frequently consisted of dispersed strips, which militated against efficient farming; one-third of them had no iron plough but only a wooden contrivance; one-fourth had no horse or ox for ploughing. It was therefore primarily as a practical measure for increasing production that the Government adopted the policy of integrating the peasant holdings into large farms, but the argument in favour of stimulating output was reinforced by the fact that the disappearance of individual enterprise would bring the rural economy into line with the prevailing Socialist ideology. In short the twin aims of collectivization were, firstly, to overcome the backwardness of the Russian farmer by the mechanization of agriculture and the application of modern technique; and secondly, to transform the social structure by creating new property relations.

*The  
collectivists  
movement.*

Once the decision was taken in 1929 to collectivize peasant farming, it was put into operation with ruthless vigour. Whatever may be said in favour of the amalgamation of small holdings in the interests of increased productivity, it is impossible to justify the manner in which the change was accomplished or the arbitrary cruelty inflicted on its unfortunate victims. The 'liquidation of the *kulaks*' was achieved by confiscation of their farms, houses, animals, farm implements, and even personal possessions; many of them were shot; others were deported from their villages. "No statistics are accessible as to the manner in which this enforced *diaspora* of probably some hundreds of thousands of persons was effected. The sum of human suffering involved is beyond all computation." Considerable pressure was brought to bear on the rest of the peasants to enter the collective farms, and so rapid was the rate of the enforced collectivization that within a year (1929-30) more than half the peasant holdings had been pooled. The violent zeal of the promoters had outrun their discretion, for not enough



machines were available, and the resentment of the peasants flared up in risings. The pace of the collectivist movement slackened; nevertheless by 1937 no less than 92 per cent. of the holdings, occupied by 22 million peasant families, had been merged in nearly  $\frac{1}{4}$  million collective farms, while under 2 million peasant families had retained their holdings in personal use.

There are three types of collective farms (*kolkhosi*),<sup>1</sup> Types of collective farms. representing different degrees of collective economy. The first is an association of members who cultivate their land in common for the production of grain, though the animals are privately owned. The second, known as the agricultural *artel*, is an association of members who share not only their labour in joint cultivation of the soil but also their capital in the form of working animals, implements and farm buildings. Thus land, labour and capital are collectivized, while dwelling-houses, garden plots, milch-cows, small livestock and poultry remain in individual occupation. The third (*commune*) collectivizes all branches of rural economy and not that of grain alone; and the houses are communally owned. It constitutes the most advanced type inasmuch as both production and distribution are socialized. The *artel*, which lies between the two extremes, is the predominant form: it is administered by a general meeting of members and a management committee. The collective farm is obliged to deliver to the Government a stipulated quantity of the produce, the official quota being fixed in advance, and it may then sell the surplus in the open market. The net proceeds are shared out unequally among the members, whose earnings are assessed on a piece-work basis. The theoretical possibilities of collective farms are indisputable. For one thing, agricultural production can be planned for the whole country instead of being left to individual initiative; each farm is assigned its share of the programme, and in this way supply can be adjusted more readily to the actual requirements of the community. For another thing, the size of the fields into which the farm is divided makes it possible to employ

<sup>1</sup> J. Stalin, *Building Collective Farms*.

machinery. The tractor ploughs the soil to a greater depth, while the combine-harvester economizes time and toil. In addition expert guidance can be provided, specialized workers employed, fertilizers and the resources of science utilized. Hence agriculture can be organized (so far as the vagaries of climate permit) on industrial lines designed to unite maximum production with economy of labour. In actual practice the collective farms have fallen short of the ideal, although it is claimed that they have already proved their economic superiority over peasant farms. In any event the collective farms are not Socialist institutions, for they are not State but co-operative undertakings; and the land, technically the legal property of the State, is vested in a group of co-operative producers who enjoy the profits which are earned. State farms (*Sovkhosi*)—worked with hired labour—exist in Soviet Russia, but the socialization of agriculture has not been attended with success since they cover less than 10 per cent. of the tilled area. Nor are the collective farms Communist institutions, because payments are based on the work performed and not according to the worker's needs. Indeed, the system of collective farms has not even succeeded in eliminating 'economic rent'—the differential advantages which spring from climate, soil, accessibility to urban markets, and other factors which give rise to inequality among the collective farms. As a result, a wide variation exists between them. Some have grown prosperous, others remain poor: a situation which has created a class known as 'millionaire *kolkhosi*.' It is apparent that the agrarian society of Soviet Russia has not escaped the contrasts of wealth and social position, in spite of the extermination of the *kulaks* and the trifling percentage of independent farmers.

Nationali-  
zation of  
industry

In the sphere of large-scale industry, mines, forests and railways, Socialism has superseded private enterprises; they are now owned and operated by State agencies. Immediately after the Bolshevik Revolution the workers assumed that they were to take over the factories from the former owners. A decree of November 1917 provided that in all enterprises employing wage-workers "there is in-

roduced workers' control of production, of the purchase and sale of products and raw materials, of their storage, and also of the financial management of enterprises." Workers' control was to be exercised through elected committees, which were to include representatives of the clerical and technical staff. The experiment of self-governing workshops proved a failure. In a few months a fresh decree (June 1918) placed each factory under the control of a manager appointed by a Government body. At the same time all undertakings, whose capital exceeded a stated amount, were formally confiscated and declared the property of the Soviet State. The elimination of the capitalist necessitated the creation of a new structure for the nationalized industries. They were organized on the basis of trusts, which are associations of factories grouped together on vertical or horizontal lines. The trusts enjoy considerable autonomy in the commercial and financial spheres, subject to the authority of the State supreme economic council. Many of them combined to set up common marketing organizations, termed syndicates, which were responsible for the sale of the products of their members. Subsequently the syndicates were assigned the task of working out the specific details of the State programme of production, when they became known as combinations. The execution of the programme devolves upon the factories under the supervision of the trusts. Each factory is instructed as to the nature and prices of the raw material which it will receive, and the rates of wages which it should pay, and it undertakes to supply a stipulated quantity of products at a fixed charge. Industry is financed from three sources—the reserves accumulated by the trust from its profits, advances made by the banks, and State subsidies. A percentage of the profits is taken by the State, and the rest is devoted to the reserve fund of the trust and to welfare and educational purposes. The State is thus enabled to utilize the profits of one industry for the object of financing another, and the State subsidy allocated to a trust may exceed the tax levied on its profits. Prices are officially regulated, and commodities may be sold below the cost



of production if the general interests are thereby served. Profits are a secondary consideration, since the gauge of efficiency is not profits but costs of production, output and quality.

*Planned  
economy.*

Allusion was made above to the State programme of production. The adoption of a planned economy was necessitated by the elimination of many thousands of capitalists, whose operations—guided by the motive of profit-making in a market of competitive prices—were supposed to achieve the economic harmonies of a balanced system of production and consumption. Their function has been vested in a 'State planning commission' (*Gosplan*), which directs the economic activities of the nation and determines the volume and nature of the productive processes. The objectives of the 'State plan of national economy' are defined in the constitution. The first is to "strengthen the independence" of the country by accelerating the *tempo* of industrialization: in its pursuit of 'autarky' the Soviet Union is in line with other totalitarian States which aim at economic self-sufficiency. The second is to "raise the material and cultural level of the toilers" by creating abundance out of the stream of wealth produced in fields, mines and factories. Hence the series of 'five-year plans' which are intended to organize the systematic output of 'capital goods' (factories, machinery, power-plants, etc.) and subsequently of 'consumption goods' (articles for personal use). "The weakness of our people", stated one of Stalin's reports, "lay in their technical backwardness", and to overcome it "we advanced the slogan of the 'mastery of technique.'"<sup>1</sup> The new slogan replaced, or at least thrust into the background, that of 'world revolution'; the former crusaders, it has been aptly said, exchanged their swords for machine tools.<sup>2</sup> The goal of the Soviet Government is now the reconstruction of the national economy on an industrialized basis, with the combined purpose of achieving economic independence and increased production of wealth. Already the 'five-year plans' have been responsible for an immense development

<sup>1</sup> J. Stalin, *Mastering Bolshevism*.    <sup>2</sup> M. T. Florinsky, *World Revolution*.

of industry and a corresponding growth in the number of industrial workers. It is also believed that a planned economy will eradicate one of the principal evils of the industrial system—the periodic recurrence of trade depressions and mass unemployment.

The status of the wage-earner in a socialized industrial system is reflected in the 'triangle of factory control', as it is called. This consists of the manager who is responsible for the direction of the enterprise, the party cell composed of members of the Communist party, and the factory committee representing the trade union. No control over the management is exercised by the trade union; on this ground it is denied that the Soviet factory is an 'industrial democracy', though it is claimed that if industry is not controlled directly by the workers it is operated in their interests. In contrast with capitalist countries, the trade unions in Soviet Russia are not instruments for the defence of the workers' interests and the amelioration of their conditions. Their primary purpose is to organize 'shock brigades' to speed up production. Rigid discipline in the Communist party is a guarantee of discipline in the factory, and ensures the comparative absence of friction over efforts to stimulate productivity. It is recognized that the raising of the standard of life of the Russian masses depends upon increased output; and the principle of Communism—"To each according to his needs"—is therefore discarded in favour of the principle of Socialism (as it is termed in the constitution)—"To each according to the work performed."

*Status of  
wage-  
earners.*

Not all industrial workers are wage-earners engaged in large-scale enterprises conducted by the trusts, or the municipalities, or the consumers' co-operative societies. Alongside of the Socialist system of economy the constitution expressly permits "small private economy of individual handicraftsmen, based on their personal labour and precluding the exploitation of the labour of others." Several millions are handicraftsmen who produce commodities for household use, and own both the instruments of production and the products of their labour. Many of them are organized in producers' co-operative societies (*artels*) which

*Survival of  
private  
enterprise.*

are associations of owner-producers. In consequence, small-scale enterprises have continued to survive in those branches of industry which remain outside the orbit of the State. Thus the 'world of labour' in Soviet Russia is considerably diversified. One section is employed at wages in socialized undertakings—factories, railways, mines, forests, and State farms; another consists of joint-producers organized in industrial and agricultural *artels*; a third comprises independent producers—peasants, fishermen, drivers, dress-makers, journalists, etc. The fact that the State is not the sole owner of the instruments of production implies that the worker is enabled to earn a livelihood without becoming a wage-earner. Moreover, the 'multiformity' of communal undertakings gives even the wage-earner scope for choice in the selection of an employer. The productive agencies of Soviet Russia, while in the main socialized, are not all poured into one common mould; and the trusts, the municipal and rural concerns, the consumers' co-operative societies carrying on manufacturing processes—all provide a variety of forms of organization as well as different avenues to employment. This 'multiformity' extends to internal trade, for the sale of commodities is effected through several channels—Government trading, co-operative trading, collective-farm trading, and 'bazaar' trading in which working producers (peasants, handicraftsmen, fishermen) may bring their produce to a free market for sale. Formerly the greater part of the retail trade was in the hands of consumers' co-operative societies. To liquidate their monopoly and force them by competition to improve their methods, retailing conducted by the central and municipal authorities was introduced with the result that co-operative stores have been displaced in the large towns by 'Government shops', and instead they concentrate upon the villages. Capitalist trading (that is, buying to re-sell at a profit), which was permitted under the 'New Economic Policy', is said to be virtually extinguished now that the organization has been created to take the place of the private retailer. Other branches of the Soviet economy—banking and foreign trade—are State monopolies.



We must turn from the economic to the political framework of Soviet Russia. The new constitution adopted in 1936 defined the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as "a Socialist State of workers and peasants." Its political foundation is the "soviets of toilers", just as its economic foundation is "the Socialist system of economy." It is expressly laid down that "the land, mineral deposits, waters, forests, mills, factories, mines, railways, water and air transport systems, banks, means of communication, large State-organized agricultural enterprises, as well as municipal enterprises and the principal dwelling-house properties in the cities and industrial localities, are State property, that is, the possession of the whole people." On the other hand, "the right of citizens to personal property in their income from work and in their savings, in their dwelling-houses and objects of personal use and comfort, as well as the right of inheritance of personal property of citizens, is protected by law." The Soviet Union (U.S.S.R.) is a federated State, "formed on the basis of the voluntary union of [eleven] Soviet Socialist republics possessing equal rights"; and "to every constituent republic is reserved the right freely to secede from the U.S.S.R." The highest organ of State power is the supreme soviet, by which "the legislative power is exercised exclusively." This federal parliament consists of two chambers with equal rights. When it is not in session, the controlling organ is the presidium whose members are elected by the supreme soviet. The highest executive organ is the council of people's commissars which "co-ordinates and directs" the work of its members, who in their individual capacity preside over the various departments. The "basic rights" of citizens comprise the right to work; the right to leisure; the right to free medical service and maintenance in old age, sickness or incapacitation; the right to education; the right to an equality in all spheres of life, irrespective of nationality or race or sex; the right to "freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda", freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and demonstrations, freedom of association; and finally, the right of inviolability of person

*The Soviet  
constitution.*

and of the home. The "basic duties" of citizens include the obligation to work, "labour discipline", "respect for the rules of Socialist human intercourse", and military service.

'Dictatorship of the proletariat.'

On paper the new Soviet constitution appears to spell the end of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' and to provide an approach to democracy, because it substitutes "universal, equal and direct suffrage" for election on a class basis. Lenin defined the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' as "the class struggle of the proletariat—after it has seized political power"—for the overthrow of the social and economic fabric of society. Now that this aim has been largely consummated, the Soviet political structure has been reconstructed on a broader basis which no longer excludes the classes hitherto proscribed. In actual fact, as Stalin has admitted,<sup>1</sup> "the dictatorship of the proletariat is substantially the dictatorship of the Communist party as the force which guides the proletariat"; and there is no question that the present constitution leaves unimpaired the dominant position of the Communist party (to quote its own words) "as the vanguard of the toilers and the core of all their organizations." The Soviet Union is a totalitarian State which tolerates only a single political party. The Communist party controls the machinery of government, the economic system and the apparatus of culture. "No important political or organizational problem", wrote Stalin, "is ever decided by our soviets and other mass organizations without directives from the party." The rules of the party require its members to conform to the 'general line' in theory and practice, and prohibit criticism or opposition after a decision has been made, for 'iron proletarian discipline' exacts complete submission to party authority. The members form a caucus and take the lead at meetings of the local soviets, trade unions, co-operative societies, *artels*, and other bodies; they occupy the higher offices in all the administrative and economic organs; they shape the policy in every field of Soviet activities and make themselves responsible for its fulfilment.

<sup>1</sup> J. Stalin, *Leninism*, vol. i.

The foregoing account will have served to show that the Russian Revolution takes its place in History by the side of the American and the French Revolutions. Never before has an attempt been made on a scale of such magnitude to recast the entire political, social and economic structure of a community on the basis of a theory of society propounded by certain social thinkers. The arresting features of this experiment are its sphere, its scope, and its agency—its sphere is a population now approaching 200 millions and occupying nearly one-sixth of the world's land surface; its scope is the creation of a Communist society; its agency is the whole machinery of government. In the space of two decades the landlord and the capitalist have been completely 'liquidated', and individual enterprise is restricted to small-scale undertakings of peasants and handicraftsmen based on their personal labour. The suppression of private profit-making, whether by trading in commodities or by the exploitation of hired labour, constitutes the basic principle of the Soviet economy and its point of departure from the capitalist economy. It is natural that such a structure of society, and concepts of economic life in fundamental contrast with those prevailing in Western countries, should be placed under a microscope and pitilessly dissected. Contemporaries are sharply divided in their views on the Soviet State, but not all the criticisms are ventilated by the supporters of capitalism; on the contrary, the most penetrating have proceeded from one of the principal leaders of the Bolshevik Revolution.<sup>1</sup> These criticisms disclose the reverse side of the Soviet medal, even when due allowance has been made for the difficulties of the transition from the old order to the new; and they convey the impression that a change in the form of institutions has not substantially modified the springs and motives of human conduct.

In the first place, it is denied that the Soviet Union can be regarded as a 'class-less State.' It is true that the extermination of landlords and capitalists has abolished the former division of society into 'exploiter and exploited', based on the private ownership of the means of production;

*Criticisms  
of the  
Soviet  
economy.*

*Not a  
'class-less  
State.'*

<sup>1</sup> L. Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed*.



but the assumption that there exists only a 'single social grade' seems disproved by the emergence of fresh social strata—the hierarchy of administrative officials (bureaucracy), the technical experts, and the aristocracy of skilled labour and prosperous collective farmers. These elements, which are said to number several millions, constitute the social circles of a new ruling caste, and they enjoy a higher income than the rank and file. As a result, there has developed a marked inequality in the distribution of wealth and in the standards of living. The growth of a new possessing class is viewed as a "set-back from Socialist to *bourgeois* principles", since material and cultural inequalities are the negation of a class-less society "based upon solidarity and harmonious satisfaction of all needs." Although masked by official phraseology, the trend of social differentiation has virtually re-established the inferior status of the proletarian masses, which the Bolshevik Revolution was designed to raise to an unprecedented level. Superficially it may seem true to say that "the worker in our country is not a wage-slave, he is a free workman." Actually (it is contended) "the transfer of the factories to the State changed the situation of the worker only juridically. In reality, he is compelled to live in want and work a definite number of hours for a definite wage." The internal structure of State industries conforms in essentials to the capitalist pattern. Even the 'exploitation of man by man' survives in the form of personal service to members of the higher social grades.

*Economic individualism.*

In the next place, while the motive of profit-making has ceased to be the mainspring of the mechanism of production and exchange—in consequence of the extinction of capitalist manufacturing and private retailing—the motive of pecuniary gain is retained as the mainspring of the mechanism of distribution. Economic individualism is deliberately stimulated by encouraging the worker to earn as much as he can through piece-work payment and special remuneration for technical skill.<sup>1</sup> "In the struggle to achieve

<sup>1</sup> In one of his addresses (1934) Stalin distinguished between a Socialist society where the workers "receive according to the amount of work they have done", and a Communist society, where the workers "receive according to their needs."

European and American standards the classical methods of exploitation, such as piece-work payment, are applied. State ownership of the means of production does not surround with a halo of sanctity the sweat-shop system, which wears out the greatest of all productive forces—man." Moreover, inequality of income and privileges arouses the resentment of the poorly-paid workers and re-creates the class struggle, which officially is presumed to have been eradicated from the new industrial order. The standard of living of the masses is admittedly low in comparison with Western standards; but the Soviet experiment is still in its early stages, and in two decades (which include a civil war) a backward country could not be expected to attain the level of highly-developed countries. In addition, the diversion of economic resources towards capital investment for the purpose of building up an industrial State has involved a shortage of commodities for personal consumption. A factor of more permanent significance is the low productivity of labour *per capita*, which is variously attributed to the lack of 'industrial aptitude' among the rank and file or to the inefficiency of the administrative personnel. The technique of industry has been borrowed from the capitalist West, but "men lag behind technique." Whatever the reason, the volume of production—despite an impressive array of statistics—falls short of the requirements of nearly 200 million people, while the poor quality of the products is universally conceded. If these defects are remedied, it will then be possible to determine whether the Soviet or the capitalist economy is the superior in providing the masses with material and cultural necessities as well as continuous employment.

Other criticisms directed against 'the new civilization', as it has been optimistically termed, impinge upon the fundamental rights of the individual without which economic security is only a badge of slavery. We have seen that the new constitution embodies a 'Declaration of the Rights of Man', yet the exact import of the guarantees remains obscure. There is freedom of voting—but it is restricted to an official list which excludes 'opposition' candidates.

*'The  
Rights of  
Man.'*

There is freedom of speech—but the basic principles of the Soviet structure may not be questioned. The Government encourages criticisms of the administration because it wishes to remedy defects; it invites public discussion on proposals on which it has an open mind; but the fear of being stigmatized as ‘counter-revolutionary activity’ effectively silences any criticisms of official policy once it is authoritatively laid down. And the ‘freedom of the press’ does not extend to the advocacy of any other forms of political or social institutions. The most sympathetic analyst of the Soviet experiment has uttered a warning against “the repression of independent thinking on fundamental social issues”, which is producing the “disease of orthodoxy.”<sup>1</sup> Lastly, personal freedom is nullified by the wide-spread organization of the political police, whose sinister activities threaten the liberty and even the life of the individual. If, however, freedom is defined not in a negative sense as ‘the absence of restraint’ but in a positive sense as ‘the presence of opportunity’, then (it is claimed) there is greater opportunity for the community as a whole in the Soviet Union than elsewhere.

*Estimate  
of the  
Russian  
Revolution.*

Two decades have elapsed since the outbreak of the Russian Revolution and the creation of the first Workers’ Republic. It is still too early to appraise its true significance or even to assess the chances of its survival. (It is a unique experiment in the political sphere, the social sphere, and the economic sphere) — though the very violence of the reaction against Western institutions suggests the likelihood of a swing of the pendulum. (The new constitution may be a paper constitution, but it indicates the beginning of a return to democratic concepts which had been too hastily discarded by the architects of the Soviet State.) It can hardly be doubted that social and economic modifications will also be introduced, which will help to bridge the gulf between the Soviet economy and its antithesis. As the nation progresses to a higher level, its increased wealth will be reflected in the evolution of new strata of society and in

<sup>1</sup> S. and B. Webb, *Soviet Communism*.



the growth of more complex wants, which can only be satisfied by greater latitude to free enterprise. And while the Soviet Union may be expected to recede from some of the more rigid forms of collectivism, elsewhere the capitalist structure is passing through a transitional phase which must profoundly affect its character. One thing at least is clear. The advent of the proletarian State has not, up to the present, raised the economic condition of the Russian masses to the level enjoyed in Western countries. The standard of living depends upon efficiency of production as well as upon equity of distribution; and no change in the social system can adequately promote the well-being of the workers unless it is accompanied by a sufficient production of wealth. Until the Soviet Union overcomes the problem of its economic backwardness, it cannot hope to become an 'Arcadia of Socialism.' However, the true criterion of the Soviet economy is neither the fanciful gauge of a terrestrial paradise, nor the "excessive worship of the magic power of Socialist methods", but an authenticated comparison of the general position of the mass of the population under the czarist and Bolshevik regimes. It is difficult to make a just comparison at this stage of the transition, though at any rate it is apparent that all the resources of the community are now being utilized with dynamic energy in a movement to raise the economic and cultural level of the masses. The movement has already borne fruit in the comprehensive social services which a backward and impoverished country has succeeded in providing. Maintenance in old age, sickness or loss of capacity, free medical service, a shorter working-day and annual vacations with pay, the guarantee of employment, and a system of compulsory elementary education which has almost stamped out illiteracy—all these things represent a great advance in human welfare. The final verdict must be left to posterity, which alone can weigh the permanent value of what may have been accomplished by the Russian Revolution against the price which has been paid in untold human suffering. Yet the contemporary historian may venture perhaps to anticipate posterity's verdict on one

point. The triumph of the Soviet experiment would not establish the certainty of success in other countries. There are factors in the situation of the Soviet Union which are peculiar to it—first, the temperament of the Slavonic race with its capacity for sacrifice, for suffering and for idealism; second, the traditional organization of the Russian village on communal lines based on collective ownership of the land and control over agricultural operations; and third, the extent of its economic resources which make the country in large measure self-supporting and therefore independent of the exigencies of a world economy.

## (v)

## NATIONAL SOCIALIST GERMANY

*The  
German  
Revolution.*

In the wake of Germany's military collapse in the summer of 1918 followed a political revolution at home. For four years the German people, buoyed up by the hopes of a decisive victory, had steeled themselves to endure the hardships inflicted by the naval blockade. These hopes had grown dim with the entry of the United States into the war, and now they were completely dashed to the ground. Malnutrition, which had gravely impaired its powers of moral and physical resistance, gave a sharper edge to the disappointment suffered by the German nation and made it receptive of the new ideas that came with the East wind. German prisoners of war brought back from their captivity in Russia the political contagion which they readily communicated to their fellow-countrymen. "I never contemplated", wrote General Ludendorff who had allowed Lenin to cross German territory on his way to Russia, "that the Russian Revolution might one day undermine our own strength; our enemies gave us revolution." It was not alone the enemies of Germany who gave her revolution, but undoubtedly the Russian upheaval increased the revolutionary ferment in neighbouring countries. Under the combined influence of all these factors—the breakdown of the German military machine, the privations suffered by

appreciation of the marked economic recovery which the nation had made after the war. For all the time the political situation was steadily deteriorating; and the rise to power of a new political sect aroused the deepest forebodings as to the direction which would be taken by the future policy of the German Reich. The political sect, into whose hands were entrusted the destinies of a nation of nearly 70 millions, called itself by the name of the National Socialists German Workers party.

In the days to come future historians may be perplexed to explain the ease with which the German people succumbed without any show of resistance to the overthrow of their personal rights and civic liberties as embodied in the Weimar constitution. For the paradox of the National Socialist movement is that it succeeded at the very moment when it was apparently on the wane. The leader of the movement, Adolf Hitler, an Austrian by birth and an "artisan in the building trade"<sup>1</sup> by profession, whose education was so imperfect that he was unable to write grammatical German,<sup>2</sup> began his career as a political agitator after the war. In the pursuit of his career he provided a signal illustration of his own pregnant dictum, in *Mein Kampf*, that "periods of collapse are marked by the predominant activity of the worst elements." A premature attempt at a *coup d'état* in 1923 brought him into collision with the authorities, and he suffered detention in a prison fortress where he wrote *Mein Kampf* which was published in 1925. In this book, the product of a powerful but unbalanced mind obsessed with fanatical prejudices, Hitler repudiated the parliamentary practice of majority rule. In its place he advanced the concept of a "true German democracy consisting of the free election of the leader: here there is no roll-call of a majority on individual questions but only the rule of an individual." He also foreshadowed the future programme of Germany's territorial ambitions. Appealing to the principle of self-determination, he laid down that "the German Reich, as a State, should include

<sup>1</sup> So he describes himself in *Who's Who*.

<sup>2</sup> He alludes in *Mein Kampf* to "my lack of schooling."



all Germans." However this principle, which was to be invoked when it was a question of including all German-speaking minorities in the Reich, was discarded when it was a question of incorporating non-German territory, for he added: "We must not let political frontiers veil from us the frontiers of eternal justice." And "the frontiers of eternal justice" were to be determined by the nebulous principle of *lebensraum* (living space)—"The aim of National Socialism must be to secure for the German people an extension of the space in which our people must live." The solution of the problem of Germany's expansion lay in the East—"If we speak to-day of new territory in Europe, we can primarily think only of Russia and the border States." The conviction that Russia was "ripe for collapse" opened up dazzling possibilities, which Hitler voiced in his Nuremberg speech in 1936: "If the Urals with their immeasurable wealth of raw materials, Siberia with its rich forests, and the Ukraine with its limitless cornfields, lay within Germany, this country under National Socialist leadership would swim in plenty. We would produce so that every single German would have more than enough to live on." For France, *Mein Kampf* expressed a deep-seated antagonism—"France is the eternal and mortal enemy of the German nation."

National  
Socialist  
propa-  
ganda.

The German Government showed inexplicable blindness or culpable negligence in the leniency displayed towards a political faction, which preached violence and did not scruple at murder.<sup>1</sup> All Germany was kept in a state of turmoil by an incendiary campaign, which was based on the deliberate provocation of the 'enemy' in order to stir up a miniature civil war. With the terrorization of their opponents the National Socialists combined an elaborate propaganda which promised all things to all men, and a showmanship which hypnotized audiences into an uncritical reception of hysterical oratory. At first the National Socialists made little headway, despite their 'successes' in breaking up the meetings of other political parties and in nocturnal roaming

<sup>1</sup> In 1923 the party was dissolved and proscribed. "To-day [wrote Hitler in 1926] it is free again, and is stronger and more stable than ever before."

of the streets in order to molest innocent wayfarers of a non-Nordic appearance. Hitler himself relates in *Mein Kampf* that "at the very first utterance criticizing the Treaty of Versailles the audience interrupted with repeated cries of 'Brest-Litovsk!' They viewed the treaty as a triumph of democracy and as an instrument of retribution. It was necessary to burn oneself into their brains as an enemy of that treaty. I contrasted the two peace treaties showing the infinite humaneness of the one as against the inhuman cruelty of the other." Despite these oratorical efforts the membership of the party—whose nucleus was composed of army politicians embittered by Germany's military collapse—grew very slowly for some years, and its programme when it was formulated failed to attract any attention. The programme was embodied in twenty-five points. The first contained a demand for the union of all Germans in a pan-German State based on the principle of self-determination. The second required the abrogation of the Treaties of Versailles and St. Germain. The third alluded to the need for colonies with a view "to maintain our people and provide a settlement of our surplus population." Other points included the replacement of the professional army by a national army; the creation of "a strong central authority in the State"; the abolition of all unearned incomes; and a variety of Socialist proposals which were afterwards discreetly shelved. Anti-Semitism figured prominently in the programme, which foreshadowed the exclusion of the Jewish subjects of the Reich from the rights of citizenship and the means of earning a livelihood.

The strength of National Socialism was first revealed to the world in the general election of 1930, when it increased its representatives in a *Reichstag* of 576 members from 12 to 107—a gain of 95 seats, which was made largely at the expense of the extreme Right (the Nationalists). The Communists won 23 seats, which raised their total to 77 seats. The Social Democrats with 143 seats remained the largest party, but the National Socialists were now the second party in the German parliament. Hitler acclaimed his triumph with the words: "Heads will roll in this struggle"

*Growth of  
National  
Socialism.*

—a prediction which the subsequent butchery of his opponents rendered no idle boast. The next trial of strength came in 1932 when Marshal von Hindenburg, who had been elected president in 1925 at the age of 77 upon the death of Herr Ebert, stood for a second term of office of seven years. He received 53 per cent. of the votes, Hitler 37 per cent., and a Communist candidate 10 per cent. In the same year another general election was held, and in a *Reichstag* of 608 members the National Socialists had 230 seats, the Social Democrats 133 seats, and the Communists 89 seats. The Government ordered a new election, and in a *Reichstag* of 584 members there were 196 National Socialists who received 11 $\frac{3}{4}$  million votes, 121 Social Democrats with 7 $\frac{1}{4}$  million votes, and 100 Communists with 6 million votes. The National Socialist movement, which had lost over 2 million votes, registered for the first time a decline, while the Communists showed a progressive increase. Despite the set-back, the National Socialists had become the principal party in the *Reichstag*, and their leader was invited by the president to become chancellor. He demanded dictatorial powers which would enable him to govern without the legislative body, in which he did not have a majority. The president, now in his eighty-fifth year, was mindful of his oath to preserve the German constitution when he responded: "He would not be doing his duty to the German people, if he handed over his presidential powers to the leader of a party which has repeatedly emphasized its exclusiveness. It would inevitably lead to a party dictatorship bringing in its train a bitter aggravation of the conflicts within the German people."

The  
Reichstag  
fire.

Hitler's passion for power proved stronger than the convictions which he professed, and in January 1933 he assumed the office of chancellor at the head of a coalition ministry consisting of Nationalists (that is, Conservatives) and National Socialists. It was apparently expected by the president's advisers that the responsibility of office would have a sobering influence upon the National Socialist leaders, or alternatively that their political inexperience would cause them to be completely overshadowed by their



astute colleagues in the cabinet. These calculations were signally wide of the mark; and the course of events proceeded on the lines indicated in the fable of the lamb which lay down with the lion. New elections were ordered for the *Reichstag*. On the eve of the elections the council chamber of the *Reichstag* was opportunely set on fire. The National Socialists alleged that this act of incendiarism was intended as the prelude to a Communist insurrection. The president consented to an emergency decree which suspended the constitutional guarantees of German liberties. It declared that "restraints on personal liberty, on freedom of speech, on freedom of the press, association and assembly, as well as confiscation of property and the right to search private houses, are permissible." And from that day the constitutional guarantees remained in abeyance. Armed with the arbitrary powers conferred by the presidential decree, the Government banned the Communist party as illegal, and in Prussia even the Social Democrats were debarred from publishing their newspapers or carrying on election propaganda. Prominent Communists were charged with complicity in the plot to burn the *Reichstag*, but when they were put on trial they were acquitted. Nothing could be proved against the Communist party; and concurrent indications point in the direction that the National Socialists bore responsibility for the fire, which was evidently intended as an 'election bomb' to overwhelm their political opponents. Under the influence of the panic which swept over the German people, the National Socialists obtained 17 million votes or 44 per cent. of the total, and the Nationalists received 8 per cent., so that in forming a coalition they had a majority over the other parties. In July (1933) the coalition was dissolved, and the National Socialists gathered the reins of power into their own hands. They proceeded at once to suppress every political party in Germany other than their own. Fresh elections were held, in which only those selected by the National Socialists were permitted to stand as candidates. In this manner Germany followed the precedent set by Fascist Italy, and became a country with a single political

party, that is, a totalitarian State. In August 1934 President von Hindenburg died; the offices of president and chancellor were merged; and Hitler became *fürher und reichskanzler* (leader and chancellor).

Rise of  
National  
Socialism  
due to :  
(i) Treaty  
of Ver-  
sailles.

✓ The rise of National Socialism is frequently traced to the severity of the terms imposed upon Germany by the Treaty of Versailles. It is held that the degrading conditions of the peace settlement destroyed the self-respect of the German people. They had drained the cup of national humiliation to its dregs, and their feelings grew embittered towards their victorious adversaries. ✓ In their despondency they blindly followed the leader who raised the banner of revolt and flung defiance in the face of their unconscion-<sup>1</sup>able taskmasters. This view is specious but shallow. It ignores the facts—firstly, that fourteen years elapsed between the Treaty of Versailles and the attainment of office by the National Socialists; secondly, that in the early years after the war of 1914–18, when the prestige of Germany was at its lowest ebb, their movement was stagnant; thirdly, that their advent to power was delayed until nearly a decade after the notable recovery of Germany's forfeited status as evinced in the Treaty of Locarno and her entry into the League of Nations; lastly, that the occupied territory was completely evacuated in 1930, the payment of reparations was virtually ended in 1931, and Germany's equality with the other Powers in respect of armaments was recognized in 1932. It was at the moment when Germany was losing the last of her shackles that the National Socialists grasped the power, for which they had struggled during long years of tortuous tactics and political terrorism. At most the Treaty of Versailles was a subsidiary cause of the success of the National Socialists. It gave the latter an opportunity to pose as super-patriots, and to denounce as a traitor to the German nation every German Government which sought to remove the country's grievances by the method of conciliatory approach to the Western Powers. In particular the National Socialists repudiated the payment of reparations; but a German chancellor had intimated in 1932 that

the Reich would never resume reparation payments, although his firm stand had not saved his ministry from overthrow.

One cardinal factor in a complex situation was the growth of Communism in Germany. While their advance was less spectacular, the extremists of the Left kept pace with the extremists of the Right. Their representatives in the *Reichstag* mounted from 77 in 1930 to 89 in the first election of 1932; and in the second election of that year, when the Nationalist Socialists suffered a reverse, the Communists won 100 seats. The Communist gains were achieved at the expense of the Social Democrats, for when political extremism is in favour the moderate parties go to the wall. There is no reason to suppose that the increase of Communist strength was an indication that Germany was actually moving in the direction of Bolshevism. It is probable that many supported the Communist party, in preference to other political groups, because it offered a more vigorous resistance to the National Socialists. If the German people decisively rejected Bolshevism in the critical days when their vaunted military machine had fractured and their hereditary rulers were in flight, they would scarcely have succumbed to it at a time when the glamour of the Russian Revolution had ceased to cast its spell over the minds of the workers in other lands. None the less, the wide-spread fear of a coming Communist revolution furnished the National Socialists with the most effective plank in their platform, namely, the slogan—"If the National Socialist party collapses, there will be another ten million Communists in Germany." It also brought them the material resources without which they could not have financed their costly campaign. Large industrialists supplied funds to a movement which was still ostensibly a 'Workers' party' with a Socialist programme; and unlimited means of publicity were provided through the instrumentality of the leading film and press magnate, who belonged to a party on the extreme Right. Even after their seizure of power the National Socialists continued to exploit the prevailing dread of Communism, and to pose as the bulwark against a world revolution. Their pronounced hostility to Russia—displayed in violent diatribes

(ii) Growth  
of Com-  
munism.



in the press and on the platform—was in essence a revival of the historic feud between the Teutonic and Slavonic races, now reinforced by Germany's desire to gain control of the natural resources of the Ukraine; but it was masked under the guise of a conflict of ideologies. The creation of the Anti-Comintern (Anti-Communist) Pact in 1936 between Germany and Japan, to which Italy and other countries subsequently adhered, was intended to strengthen the position of the totalitarian States, both at home and abroad, by rallying to their support all who dissented from the Communist creed—as though the sole choice which confronted men of political sanity was either one or other of two extremes. It no doubt served its purpose of convincing a large body of neutral opinion within and without the Reich that the National Socialists had saved Germany—and would fight to save Europe—from Communism. The belief that they alone held the pass against the 'enemy' was largely responsible for their long retention of the powers of a dictatorship.

(iii) *Economic  
unrest.*

Other factors contributed to the triumph of the National Socialists, for their movement mirrored all the facets of post-war Germany. They exploited with marked success the diverse elements of unrest which were seething in a cauldron of disaffection. They worked upon the anti-capitalist feelings of the lower middle class, composed of peasants and small tradesmen, to whom they made lavish promises. German agriculture was in a depressed condition owing to the reduced purchasing power of the urban population; and the farmers, who had become heavily burdened with debt during the period of high prices, were assured that public money would be abundantly provided for their relief. The small shopkeepers suffered from the competition of the large stores, and one of the twenty-five points of the National Socialist programme was baited with an undertaking that the large stores would be "immediately communalized." The National Socialists also drew to their side the victims of an inflated currency, whose incomes had been wiped out by the depreciation of the mark. Above all, they enlisted in their cause the battalions of unemployed, whose numbers

were doubled during 1930 and amounted at the end of the year to nearly 5 millions. This immense increase of unemployment—due to the ‘ economic blizzard ’ which now held the world in its devastating grip—was the most decisive element in the situation; and it was no mere coincidence that in the same year the National Socialist party for the first time assumed formidable proportions. When it is remembered that the economic depression caused a political upheaval in the United States, and had a profound repercussion upon Great Britain’s fiscal and currency policies, it is not surprising that it shook the pillars of the unstable regime in Germany and brought them crashing to the ground. The old political parties were forced to give way before the onslaught of the young and confident upstart, which claimed to have a panacea for every economic malady. It was the good fortune of the National Socialists that they came into power on the eve of the world economic recovery; if their summons to office had been delayed a few months the decline in popular support, evinced in the general election of 1932, would probably have been greatly accelerated.

In addition to the bait of a specious economic programme, the National Socialists advocated a policy of Anti-Semitism <sup>(iv) Other factors.</sup>—“ that barometer of the *moral* of a people ”—which attracted the support of those who made their fellow-citizens of the Jewish faith the scapegoat for all the misfortunes which had come upon Germany. Moreover, they provided an outlet for the military leanings of the German youth (who were no longer conscripted for service in the national army) by instituting armed forces of their own. The latter, like the retainers of the great English households of the fifteenth century, wore the livery of the party to which they owed allegiance and in effect they set up a State within a State. Successive German Governments abdicated their authority by permitting the growth of a private army—until a point was reached, as in Italy, when the alternative was civil war or capitulation. Again, it must be borne in mind that throughout their history the Germans have been wont to submit to the authority of one individual, doubtless as

the result of their military traditions; that the constitutional regime was too short-lived to take deep root among them; and that the multiplicity of parties in the *Reichstag* produced parliamentary deadlocks and served to discredit the system of government by consent—in the general election of 1930 no fewer than twenty-four parties presented candidates. The success of the National Socialists is further explained by the fact that, in order to intimidate and silence their political opponents, they pursued the tactics of terrorism which did not stop short of murder. Their crimes generally went unpunished, and the failure of the authorities to curb their excesses gave the perpetrators a sense of immunity, which increased their daring while it discouraged the forces of law and order. At the same time, in their campaign for public support they indulged in a vehement and unscrupulous propaganda, addressed not to the reason but to the passions and prejudices and cupidity of the people, coupled with an instinct for showmanship which exercised a hypnotic influence upon their audiences. Hitler's description in *Mein Kampf* of enemy war propaganda was a faithful reflection of his own practices: "At the beginning it appeared crazy in the impudence of its assertions, later it became unpleasant, and finally it was believed." The technique of National Socialist propaganda was expounded by the leader himself in a noteworthy passage: "All propaganda must adapt its intellectual level to the capacity of the least intelligent. The more it works on the feelings of the masses, the more pronounced will be its success. Concentrating on a few points, it must perpetually repeat them in the form of confident and positive assertions." The powerful appeal made by this propaganda was reinforced by the example which a neighbouring State had set in breaking away from the democratic tradition. The ease with which the Fascist revolution was accomplished in Italy allayed in many quarters the apprehensions of a sanguinary conflict following in the wake of a National Socialist victory. And lastly, the lack of unity—of common purpose—among those who opposed National Socialism enabled it to sweep them away out of its path as autumn



leaves are scattered before the wind. The Communists held the notion that they could turn the triumphant march of National Socialism to their own advantage, on the assumption that the collapse of the existing political fabric would prepare the way for their own conquest of power. The Social Democrats and the other parties succumbed with scarcely an effort at resistance. Over the effete and dispirited factions of the Weimar republic the arrogant and brutal vigour of the new sect led by an army corporal rode roughshod into the domain of the Third German Reich.

A protracted war is usually inimical to the survival of the principles of Liberalism and Internationalism. The concentration of all activities in the hands of the State for the prosecution of the war does not favour the maintenance of individual liberties; and the animosities which are stirred up by the conflict poison the atmosphere of international good will. In this respect the conflict of 1914-18 produced effects similar to those which followed the Napoleonic wars a century earlier, when reaction cast its baneful shadow over the greater part of Europe and national feeling was everywhere intensified. For a brief interlude it appeared as though History might not 'repeat itself.' During more than a decade a Liberal Germany avoided the excesses of a distorted nationalism; but she was fated to experience the disease with aggravated symptoms. In the new Germany (the Third Reich) the forces of Liberalism were suppressed and nationalism in its most extreme form became rampant. Totalitarianism and racial exclusiveness served as the twin pillars of the National Socialist regime.

*Reaction in Germany.*

We turn first to the extinction of Liberalism. The National Socialist State, like the Fascist State and the Soviet State, constituted what is known as a totalitarian State—a phenomenon new to History. The totalitarian differs from the democratic State because it prohibits all political parties other than the party which supports the Government. One of Hitler's first decrees was to lay down that:

"There is only one political party in Germany, and that

*The totalitarian State.*

is the National Socialists German Workers party." The influence of the party was all-pervasive in every sphere of life whether political, economic or cultural. The Third Reich permitted no independent criticisms of the administration in newspapers or on the platform. It abolished the freedom of the press, of the radio, of the Universities and schools, of the stage and cinema; it rigidly controlled every expression of opinion and all manifestations of social and economic activity. It did not recognize the personal rights or safety of the individual, who could be arrested and imprisoned without ever being brought to trial; nor did it tolerate the existence of independent trade unions. The government of the country was vested in a dictator who enjoyed the power of ruling by decree. The legislature (*Reichstag*) was restricted to the members of one party and met only at rare intervals, not to deliberate or criticize but to listen to an address from the *führer*, after which it dispersed. Thus, in spite of the plebiscites in which the German people were nominally invited on occasion to record their approval of their rulers, the National Socialist regime was not government by consent but government by coercion. To intimidate the population, 'concentration camps' were instituted where prisoners were kept without even the pretence of legal formalities for a period which depended upon the arbitrary will of their jailers. The sadistic treatment of those who were interned in these camps made National Socialism a by-word for cruelty. A German writer, Leon Feuchtwanger, declared (1933) that "barbarism such as Germany had not experienced since the Thirty Years' War was spreading over the country." The National Socialists, he wrote, "have smashed the standards of the civilized world to pieces." Their crimes were generally perpetrated behind a veil of secrecy, but Hitler's massacre of the opponents within his own camp could not be concealed from the public view. In 1934 it was officially admitted that seventy-seven members of the Left wing of the party had been executed, though actually the number was greatly exceeded; the victims included a former chancellor who was shot down with his wife in his own home.

By proscribing their opponents the National Socialists relentlessly put to silence those who dissented from their views; by controlling every vehicle of information they fettered the minds of the German nation; by manipulating the system of education they instilled into the rising generation a spirit of race fanaticism.

The strength of England is largely due to the variety of races which found their way to her shores. They have given her the capacity for empire which comes of understanding the needs and aspirations of other peoples; they have given her the breadth of vision which comes of the intermingling of points of view; they have given her the tolerance which comes of harmonizing different opinions. The English constitution—with its avoidance of extremes, and its respect for basic concepts combined with a flexibility which permits of easy adaptation to the needs of an ever-changing society—reflects the fundamental traits of the English character: and the English character is a cord woven of many strands. The philosophy of National Socialism, if the term may be applied to a movement which produced no great thinkers and was compounded of half-baked dogmas kneaded into an inchoate mass, rested on a principle which was the antithesis of the English tradition. It exalted the purity of the race as the sole criterion of nationality; it considered that they alone belonged to the German nation who were presumed to come of Aryan stock; it denied the rights of citizenship to those born and reared on German soil, speaking the German language, educated in German schools, sharing the German view of life, fighting and if need be dying for the German fatherland—if the blood of 'non-Aryans' flowed in their veins. The fallacy of this race obsession lies in a confusion between nationality—which implies a civic status and an adherence to a particular way of life—and race which is the physical basis of the human species, and is only one of the elements in the formation of political entities. It is not surprising that a race fanaticism which challenged the brotherhood of man, and created unbridgable gulfs, should have excited world-wide protest. Even in Germany it evoked dissent.

*Race fanaticism.*



The Catholic bishops issued a joint pastoral letter, in which they said that to define the membership of a nation exclusively in terms of race and blood "must involve injustice."

*Persecu-  
tion of  
'non-  
Aryans.'*

The doctrine of racial exclusiveness was applied not only to the Jewish inhabitants of the Third Reich but to all 'non-Aryan' Christians. A series of measures deprived them of the rights of citizenship including the suffrage; barred them from public offices and from the liberal professions—law, medicine, teaching and the civil service; crippled their economic activities; shut them out of the cultural life of the community; and pursued the avowed aim of driving them into exile by robbing them of their property as well as their means of livelihood. The high commissioner for refugees reported in 1935 that: "More than half a million persons, against whom no charge can be made except that they are not what the National Socialists choose to regard as 'Nordic', are being crushed. Again, as so often during their long heroic and tragic history, the Jewish people are used as the scapegoat for political and partisan purposes. The National Socialists level against them charges of the most outrageous and untenable kind. They ignore all the facts of the continuous loyalty of the Jews in Germany; for example, during the Empire when Jews helped to unify Germany and to make it strong; during the war [of 1914–18] when a percentage of Jewish youth as high as that of any other religious community in the Reich gave their lives for the fatherland, and Jewish scientists and men of affairs helped so notably to enable Germany to prolong the struggle; and under the Republic when Jewish leaders aided in saving Germany from some of the worst effects of defeat. Instead, it has been found useful to attribute to the Jews the responsibility for the misery and dejection which the German people suffered during the last years of the war [of 1914–18] and the decade that followed. Though less than a one-hundredth part of the total population the Jews are held responsible for all the adversity which the German people had to undergo. As in the Middle Ages when they were massacred and ex-

pelled from the German States as the cause of the Black Death, so to-day they are eliminated from the economic and cultural life of Germany and degraded on the ground that they were the cause of the German humiliation. So far does this hatred extend that even the names of the Jewish war-dead may no longer be engraved on war memorials." (Throughout the world the excesses of the German Anti-Semites were regarded as an outrage upon civilization. If the conscience of mankind was stirred by the relapse of a civilized nation into barbarism, it was because this deliberate attempt to extirpate a law-abiding community, whose only crime was their race, struck at the very root of the moral order and menaced the security of all.) Whenever we appear indifferent to the perpetration of an injustice, it is our own safety that we place in jeopardy.

Persecution breeds persecution, for once a breach is made in the defences which tolerance erects around the human spirit the flood-tide of evil passions pours through with unrestrained violence. From the persecution of the Jews and 'non-Aryan' Christians, inspired by race bigotry, it was a single step to the persecution of Roman Catholics and Protestants because they, too, could not be fitted into the National Socialist conception of the State. The racial and educational theories of National Socialism were irreconcilable with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. As early as 1931 the German bishops condemned National Socialism when they affirmed that: "A Catholic Christian must not become a member of the National Socialist party while and in so far as it advances political and educational views that are opposed to the Catholic doctrine." To this was added the pronouncement that what National Socialism termed Christianity was not "the Christianity of Christ." National Socialist attacks upon the Church and the arrest of Catholic priests led the Pope to declare formally that there was a Catholic persecution in Germany. The Protestant Church also found itself in conflict with the pagan doctrines of National Socialism, which referred to Christianity as 'foreign ideology.' The Evangelical clergy, who upheld traditional Christianity against the neo-Paganism

*Persecution of religion*

3>63

of race worship, proclaimed that they stood "for the Bible and against a new Heathenism."<sup>1</sup> They asserted that the National Socialist creed, founded on "a racial and nationalistic view of life", was a "deadly danger." Protestant pastors were sent to concentration camps but the spirit of the orthodox clergy—who showed a courage in signal contrast with the ignominious capitulation of the politicians—remained unbroken. National Socialism thus found itself opposed by the three great religions of the Western world, which saw in the new Heathenism of race idolatry the negation of God.

*Foreign  
policy.*

The methods by which the National Socialists established their domination in the domestic arena were applied, with the same conspicuous success, in the sphere of foreign politics. The keynote of these methods was the rejection of compromise and the reliance on force. The new regime preferred to take rather than receive; to tear up treaties by a unilateral repudiation of its obligations rather than to modify them by amicable negotiations; to spring its measures suddenly upon the world without any warning; and to keep the nerves of Europe on edge by creating an atmosphere of tension. The same good fortune attended the National Socialists abroad as at home, since in both cases they profited by the vacillation which reigned in their opponents' camp. In the divided counsels and irresolute policy of the democratic countries they were quick to discern their best ally. To cloak their designs they professed to have no aggressive intentions, but only in order that they might not be disturbed in their extensive preparations for war. If once again an armed Germany bestrode the Continent like a colossus, her recovery was due less to her own intrinsic strength than to the failure of other States to check her advance when it lay in their power to do so with comparative ease. It was the irony of events that repeated concessions to force served but to encourage the Third Reich to make each concession in turn the stepping-stone of a fresh demand.

<sup>1</sup> A manifesto of the Confessional Movement condemned National Socialism for supporting pagan doctrines, and for "tolerating the virtual deification of Hitler himself."



In a swift succession of measures it was proclaimed to the whole world that Germany renounced her obligations under the Treaty of Versailles, and was inflexibly resolved to destroy the territorial settlements imposed by her victorious adversaries. And the other signatory Powers began their historic retreat from Versailles, along which the milestones were marked by futile paper protests. The first step was taken in October 1933 when Germany gave notice of her resignation from the League of Nations, in order to obtain freedom of action and release herself from the restraints laid upon her by the Covenant. In March 1935 a statement was issued which announced the restoration of military conscription. "The German Government renews before the German people, before the entire world, its assurance that it does not intend in rearming Germany to create any instrument for warlike attack, but, to the contrary, exclusively for defence and thereby for the maintenance of peace." The worth of this assurance was to be tested in the course of the next few years when an instrument created "exclusively for defence" was employed to destroy the independence of three neighbouring States. Protests were uttered by France, Great Britain and Italy, of whom the last declared that she "cannot simply accept as situations of fact those determined by unilateral decision which annuls the undertakings of international character." Within a very brief space of time the walls of the German chancellery were to be papered with many such notes of protest, which served no other purpose but to exhibit the impotence of those by whom they were framed. A year later (1936) Germany, taking advantage of the fact that Great Britain and France were embroiled with Italy over the question of Abyssinia, seized the occasion to denounce the Treaty of Locarno on the ground that it had been violated by the Franco-Soviet treaty of mutual assistance; and she proceeded to station troops in the German territory on the left bank of the Rhine. This military occupation of the demilitarized zone of the Rhineland brought forth fresh protests, but the opportunity to make an effective stand against the manifest tendencies of German policy,

while the National Socialist regime was still weak, was let slip.

*Revival of  
the Balance  
of Power.*

We have seen how under the Weimar republic successive German Governments had pursued the policy of collaboration with the Western Powers, and how their conciliatory attitude had borne fruit in a series of concessions which had been freely made by the other signatories to the Treaty of Versailles. Thus many of the problems bequeathed by the war of 1914-18 were in process of liquidation on the basis of collective agreement; and the conception of a United States of Europe seemed by no means visionary when it was sponsored by one of the most far-sighted of European statesmen, and given respectful attention by all the Governments of Europe. The illusion was rudely shattered when the new rulers of Germany were in the saddle; and the strident note of German *machtpolitik* was once more heard in every chancellery on the Continent. It seemed impossible to co-operate with a regime which brooked no compromise, which refused to avow its ulterior aims, and which pushed on rapidly with extensive re-armament. A fresh and menacing situation was created, and the inevitable but lamentable consequence was a return to the discredited system of the Balance of Power. France cast about for allies to meet the German danger; Russia, who was singled out by the National Socialists for venomous attack in the press and in the speeches of party leaders, had similar motives for avoiding isolation; and the two countries entered into a treaty of mutual assistance (May 1935). The latter provided that: "In the event that the Union of Soviets of Socialist Russia or France should prove to be the object of an unprovoked attack from some European State, France and the U.S.S.R. will immediately render one another assistance and support." The pact revived the alliance which had formerly existed between the two nations, and Germany's complaint of 'encirclement' was revived with it. More and more the political face of Europe in this epoch was beginning to assume its traditional aspect. Another treaty of mutual assistance was made in the same year between Russia and Czecho-Slovakia, which obliged either

party to come to the assistance of the other party in the event of an unprovoked attack, provided that the victim of the aggression received French support.

Germany sought to overcome her dangerous isolation, in which the pursuit of an uncompromising policy had placed her, by disarming gestures towards Great Britain and Poland. With Great Britain she signed a naval pact (1935), whereby she agreed that the German navy should not exceed 35 per cent. of the British navy. Its purpose was to allay British apprehensions that Germany might start another race in naval armaments; in this way it was hoped to induce the island Power to give the land Power a free hand on the Continent. With her Polish neighbour she framed a treaty (1934), which bound the contracting parties for a decade "in no case [to] have recourse to force in order to settle questions under dispute." The terms of the treaty implied that for a period of ten years Germany would not attempt to modify forcibly her eastern frontiers, including the 'Polish Corridor' against which she had bitterly inveighed. She also concluded an Anti-Comintern Pact with Japan (1936), which was directed against Russia. But the most important change in her foreign relations was the rapprochement with Italy. Although both countries were totalitarian States and professed similar ideologies, "opposed [in Mussolini's words] to all other conceptions of contemporary civilization", they had been kept apart by a conflict of views over the destiny of Austria, of whose independence Italy had constituted herself the protector. When, however, Italy became estranged from the democratic States by their opposition to her conquest of Abyssinia, she threw herself into the arms of Germany who welcomed the opportunity to gain an ally and drive a wedge between the signatories of the Treaty of Versailles. In 1936 Mussolini announced the creation of the 'Rome-Berlin axis', in which was symbolized the drawing together of the two dictatorships.

To crown these diplomatic successes, the German *führer* experienced the good fortune which often attends a political adventurer in the earlier stages of his career. The authority of the League of Nations collapsed in con-



sequence of the Abyssinian fiasco, and this momentous event marked a turning-point in the history of Europe. The imposing fabric of collective security had fallen to pieces, because its professed supporters failed to recognize the truth of the aphorism that "peace is indivisible"—and that aggression breeds aggression. As a result Germany, no longer confronted by a united Europe, was enabled to launch a far-reaching programme for the political and economic hegemony of Central and South-Eastern Europe, in order to attain her traditional objective—the *Drang nach Osten* (the Drive to the East). Her method of procedure followed the historic precedent set by Bismarck in settling accounts with one adversary after another, while in the meantime she carefully disclaimed all aggressive intentions in other quarters. Thus Austria was promised that her independence would not be forcibly violated, Czecho-Slovakia that her integrity would be maintained, France that her frontiers would be respected. The fate of Austria and Czecho-Slovakia soon demonstrated the value of any assurances given by the Third Reich, while the invasion of Poland showed that German ambitions were far from being satiated. The first to fall a victim to Germany's aggression was the Austrian republic.

*The  
Austrian  
republic.*

Austria after the war of 1914-18 had been stripped of her Empire and reduced to the dimensions of a small republic numbering 6 million people, of whom one-third dwelt in Vienna. The Emperor Karl, who succeeded Francis Joseph in 1916, renounced "all share in the business of the State" in November 1918. "This is the end of the war which Austria-Hungary has arrogantly provoked", wrote a Viennese newspaper, "and this is the end of the military monarchy." It was also the end of the military monarchy in Germany, and the establishment of a free regime in both countries strengthened the bonds of kinship and gave rise to a demand for their union. The Austrian national assembly in January 1919 resolved that German Austria was part of the German Reich. The announcement was greeted by the president of the German Reich as an "historic manifesto", and he added: "They belong to us, and we belong to them." Yet the victorious Powers

firmly refused to sanction the union since their purpose was to weaken, and not to strengthen, their defeated adversary. Austria therefore remained, for two decades, an independent State. During the early years of the republic its main problem concerned the readjustment of the economic system to the altered position of the country; but the financial support furnished under the ægis of the League of Nations enabled it gradually to overcome many of its difficulties. A new situation arose when the National Socialists in Germany were swept into power on a rising tide of unemployment and economic distress. Their triumph had an immediate repercussion upon Austria, where there already existed a National Socialist party which was now emboldened to adopt terrorist methods of assassination and bomb outrages. To repress the agitation the authorities proscribed the party, and many of its members fled to Germany where they organized themselves as an Austrian legion, which harassed the borders and kept the population in a state of unrest.

While the German Reich openly encouraged the subversive elements in Austria in the hope of wrecking the republic, the enthusiasm which the other Austrian parties had hitherto displayed for the *Anschluss* (union) with Germany was effectually quenched. In these circumstances it was clearly incumbent upon the Government to combine all the forces that were opposed to absorption in a reactionary Germany. Instead the chancellor, Dr. Dollfuss, who had come under Italian influence, suspended the constitution (1933) and ruled as a dictator by decree and without a parliament. He affirmed his intention to set up a 'Corporate State' by creating an authoritarian regime, "based on corporations" for government and economic affairs and "formed on occupational lines." As part of his programme he suppressed the Social Democrats, the largest group in Austria, whose existence was incompatible with the principles of a Fascist State. The municipality of Vienna was in the hands of the Social Democrats, who had been elected to office by two-thirds of the citizens. In order to oust them from their control of the capital, the Government

*Internal  
dissensions  
in Austria.*

in February 1934 arrested the mayor of the municipality, directed a merciless artillery bombardment against the Socialist model dwellings of the workers, imprisoned a large number of Social Democrats in concentration camps, and dissolved the Socialist party. Thus it eliminated the principal support of its professed policy, the maintenance of the country's independence. In July the Austrian National Socialists, apparently at German instigation, attempted a *putsch* in which they murdered the chancellor but failed to establish themselves in power. Italy, in her capacity as guardian of Austrian independence, mobilized troops on the Austrian frontier to ward off the possible danger of a German incursion. She objected to the *Anschluss*, because she did not wish to see the territory of the German Reich extended to her own border at the Brenner Pass.

*End of  
Austria's  
independ-  
ence.*

The new chancellor, Dr. Schuschnigg, pursued the policy of his predecessor in adhering to a regime which had no popular basis; and he also favoured the restoration of the Habsburg dynasty as the means of preserving Austria's separate existence. After the breach between Italy and her Allies in the war of 1914-18, the former paid the price of her newly-born friendship with Germany and abandoned her resistance to the annexation of Austria. A prey to internal dissensions, one section of the population (the National Socialists) striving for the *Anschluss* while another section (the Socialists) remained embittered by their treatment; bereft of its Italian protector; and left to its fate by the Western Powers which contented themselves with formal declarations of their 'interest' in the maintenance of Austrian independence—the republic proved unable to survive. As the customary prelude to violent action, Hitler gave one of his disarming assurances (1936) that Germany recognized Austria's 'complete sovereignty'; and he also promised not to encourage National Socialist propaganda in Austria. In actual fact the activities of the party grew more pronounced, and the situation came to a head in the spring of 1938. An interview took place between the German and Austrian chancellors, in which Hitler renewed his undertaking to prevent German intervention in internal



Austrian affairs, but stipulated that his own nominee should be appointed minister of the interior. Shortly afterwards Dr. Schuschnigg announced that he would hold a plebiscite on the question of Austria's independence. The sequel is related in his farewell speech delivered two days later. "The German Government to-day handed to the president an ultimatum ordering him to nominate as chancellor a person designated by the German Government, and to appoint members of an Austrian Government on orders of the German Government, otherwise German troops would invade Austria. I declare before the world that the news launched in Germany concerning disorders by workers, the shedding of streams of blood, and the creation of a situation beyond the Austrian Government's control, are lies from A to Z. The president has asked me to tell the people of Austria that he has yielded only to force." German troops poured into the country without meeting with any opposition; and the existence of the Austrian republic was terminated by a German decree proclaiming that "Austria is a land of the German Reich." In the circumstances of her inglorious end, achieved by a mixture of duplicity and violence, Austria belied the epithet of *Felix* which had been bestowed upon her in the days of her former greatness.

✓ The next State to succumb to German aggression was Czecho-Slovakia. We have described elsewhere the origin of Czecho-Slovakia and the racial distribution of her population. She soon became in many respects a model democratic republic with an advanced code of social legislation, and her prestige abroad ranked high. In her foreign policy she pursued the aim of establishing close relations with her neighbours, Roumania and Yugoslavia, with whom she concluded the Little Entente treaties. All three countries shared a common interest in their apprehension of a Habsburg restoration in Hungary, which might stimulate the agitation for the recovery of Hungary's lost territories. At home Czecho-Slovakia's main problem was the irreconcilable attitude of the German minority which numbered about 3½ millions. The condition of the Germans compared favourably with that of the racial minorities in

other lands: they had their own Universities and schools, and they were represented in the coalition cabinets. Nevertheless in the new republic the dominant race was the Czechs, and the Germans resented their secondary role in a territory where once they had ruled. They also had some tangible grievances relating to official employment and the distribution of public works; and more generous treatment of their claims might have overcome their antagonism. In that event Czecho-Slovakia might ultimately have become a compact State like Switzerland, based on harmonious co-operation between the different ethnic groups. Any prospect of this development was rudely shattered by the rise of National Socialism in Germany, which stimulated national feeling and separatist activities among the Germans across the border. The National Socialist party in Czecho-Slovakia was dissolved (1933) on account of its relations with Germany, but its place was taken by the Sudeten German party (1934). In the general election of 1935 the latter became the second largest group in parliament. The other German parties were reconciled by the measures adopted to remedy their grievances in 1937, when the Government announced a policy of 'proportionatism.' It undertook to give the German sector of the country a proportionate share of official posts, public works, relief funds, and State aid to cultural organizations, and to admit the German language to a place in official documents. These concessions failed to satisfy the Sudeten German party. Acting under the instructions of Hitler it demanded complete autonomy on the basis of the 'Karlsbad Eight Points', yet it disclaimed any desire for the disruption of the republic.

The  
Munich  
Agreement.

The incorporation of Austria in the Third Reich at once reacted upon the position of Czecho-Slovakia, for the ease with which the German *führer* had fulfilled the first of his aspirations served but to whet his ambitions. Through the medium of the press Germany launched a violent agitation against Czecho-Slovakia; the relations of the two countries became strained; and Europe was confronted with a fresh international crisis. The British Government,

although it had contracted no treaty obligations towards Czecho-Slovakia, despatched a mediator on a mission (1938) to compose the dispute between the Czechs and the Sudeten Germans. His report attached blame to both sides. "Czecho-Slovak rule in the Sudeten areas for the last twenty years, though not actually oppressive and certainly not 'terroristic', has been marked by tactlessness, lack of understanding, petty intolerance and discrimination." Political discontent was intensified by the economic depression and unemployment which had persisted since 1930. At the same time, the Government's latest proposals "embodied almost all the requirements of the Karlsbad Eight Points"; and "the more moderate Sudeten leaders desired a settlement within the frontiers of the Czecho-Slovak State", while the Sudeten extremists at Germany's instigation now pressed for self-determination. In September (1938) a German invasion of Czecho-Slovakia seemed imminent. Inasmuch as France and Russia were under an obligation to come to her assistance, and Great Britain would probably have been drawn into the war in support of France, a general conflagration must have ensued. To avert the danger the British prime minister visited the German chancellor, who declared that he was prepared to risk a world war. This threat prompted the Anglo-French note presented to the Czecho-Slovak Government, which stated that "the maintenance of peace and the safety of Czecho-Slovakia's vital interests cannot effectively be assured, unless the areas" mainly inhabited by Sudeten Germans "are transferred to the Reich"; and that Great Britain would be prepared "to join in an international guarantee of the new boundaries of the Czecho-Slovak State against unprovoked aggression." The acceptance in principle of Hitler's demand for the cession of the Sudetenland was followed by his ultimatum that it must be "handed over to Germany on October 1st." The Czecho-Slovak Government pointed out the fatal consequences involved in so startling a proposal. "It deprives us of every safeguard for our national existence. We are to yield up large proportions of our carefully prepared defences, and admit German armies deep into our country



before we have been able to make any preparations for its defence. Our national and economic independence would automatically disappear. The whole process of moving the population is to be reduced to panic and flight on the part of those who will not accept the German National Socialist regime." This reply contained an accurate forecast of the effects produced by the Munich accord (September 29th, 1938)—signed by France, Germany, Great Britain and Italy—which stipulated that the evacuation of the Sudetenland "will begin on October 1st and be completed by October 10th." Shortly afterwards Czecho-Slovakia surrendered the Teschen district to Poland, and the Slovaks were granted full autonomy. Czecho-Slovakia was induced to accept the Munich agreement by the inclusion of a declaration that Great Britain and France "stand by the offer" of an international guarantee, and that Germany and Italy "for their part will give a guarantee to Czecho-Slovakia when the question of the Polish and Hungarian minorities has been settled."<sup>1</sup>

*Hitler's  
assurances.*

For the second time a British prime minister had returned from Germany bringing with him peace—but on this occasion it was peace without honour.<sup>2</sup> The Munich accord was extremely unpalatable to the British people; and, although they were bound by no commitments to Czecho-Slovakia, there was a widespread feeling of humiliation that they had surrendered to the threat of force. One thing alone reconciled public opinion in some measure to the capitulation of the democratic Powers. An explicit assurance was given by Hitler at his meeting with the British premier that Germany had no further territorial claims to make in Europe. "Speaking with great earnestness he repeated what he had already said, namely, that this was the last of

<sup>1</sup> The enlargement of Germany's territory and population was as follows. The Treaty of Versailles reduced her territory from approximately 209,000 to 182,000 square miles; and her population fell from 65 millions (in 1910) in her former territory to 63½ millions (in 1925) in the reduced territory. The absorption of Austria and the Sudetenland increased the territory to 225,000 square miles and the total population to 80 millions.

<sup>2</sup> A joint declaration, signed by the German chancellor and the British premier, affirmed "the desire of our two peoples never to go to war with one another again."

his territorial ambitions in Europe, and that he had no wish to include in the Reich people of other races than Germans. Herr Hitler himself confirmed this account of the conversation in a speech which he made, when he said: 'This is the last territorial claim which I have to make in Europe. Germany has no more territorial problems in Europe. I shall not be interested in the Czech State any more and I can guarantee it.' " This assurance appeared to justify the attitude of the British Government in pursuing a policy of 'appeasement', though misgivings were felt by those who remembered that similar assurances had been uttered repeatedly in the past, and had been as repeatedly dishonoured.

The Munich agreement gave Europe only the briefest respite. Within six months it was torn up by one of the signatories; another solemn pledge was treated by Germany as a 'scrap of paper'; and the republic of Czecho-Slovakia ceased to exist. The event occurred with dramatic suddenness, for it was the essence of the political strategy of National Socialism to spring its 'unpleasant surprises' upon the world without warning. The final break-up of Czecho-Slovakia began with the secession of one of its component parts, Slovakia, as a result of German pressure. In March 1939 the Slovak ministry was dismissed by the central authorities at Prague for its complicity in, or connivance at, a separatist movement which threatened the disintegration of the State. The deposed prime minister appealed to the German *führer*. The latter had prompted the separatist activities in Slovakia; and at his insistence the Slovak diet was summoned and induced to sever the bonds which united the Slovaks with the Czechs. The president of the republic hastened to Berlin where he was confronted with a demand that the Czech nation should abandon its independence. German troops were already moving towards the frontier, and the president was constrained to sign a declaration that "he trustfully laid the fate of the Czech people and country into the hands of the *führer* of the German Reich." The German army occupied the provinces of Bohemia and Moravia, and made an entry into the capital (Prague),

*End of  
Czecho-  
Slovakia*

without encountering any resistance. The official explanation vouchsafed by the German Government for this invasion and subjugation of a non-Germanic State was that the German inhabitants were the victims of "brutal excesses" on the part of the Czechs. Not a particle of evidence was produced to substantiate this improbable allegation of terrorism, and the flimsy excuse masked other motives for Germany's action. It was doubtless inspired by the desire to crush the reviving spirit of the Czech people, eliminate the Czech army, gain possession of Czech resources, remove an obstacle which blocked Germany's 'Drive to the East', and lastly teach the small nations of Eastern Europe 'a lesson.' The status of the Czech territories of Bohemia and Moravia was defined in a decree which declared that for a thousand years they had been part of the German Reich, and were now annexed to 'Greater Germany' in the form of a protectorate. They were promised autonomy but the value of the promise was shown by the limitations imposed upon it. The Reich assumed charge of foreign relations, customs and military establishments, while a 'Reich protector' was empowered to veto any measure of the Czech authorities and to issue his own orders. The middle sector of the dissolved republic, Slovakia, had already asserted its independence. Its premier announced that "Slovakia is no longer a tolerated appendage but is everywhere the mistress in her own house." Within two days the 'tolerated appendage' found that it had exchanged King Log for King Stork, when Hitler proclaimed that he had "taken over protection of the Slovak State." The eastern and smallest sector of the tripartite republic, Carpatho-Ukraine (Ruthenia), also broke away but it was invaded and annexed by Hungary. This was the end of the twenty-year-old republic, which like Austria was wrecked by internal dissensions provoked and encouraged by a powerful and unscrupulous neighbour. A Swiss journal drew the moral of the downfall of Czecho-Slovakia and Austria, when it observed that their ruin was facilitated by the presence of a 'Trojan horse' in the form of discontented elements within the State.



The Western democracies did not intervene to prevent Germany's aggression and the annihilation of the Czecho-Slovak republic. The proposed international guarantee of the integrity and security of Czecho-Slovakia, which had induced her Government to surrender the Sudetenland and sacrifice her fortified line, was held to be no longer binding—on the ground that when Slovakia declared herself independent, the State which Great Britain and France had offered to guarantee ceased to exist. Yet, as the implications of Germany's action became understood, the reaction on world opinion was comparable to that produced by Germany's invasion of Belgium. For one thing, it meant the extinction of the freest and most democratic regime in Central Europe, of which the territory was now brought completely under German hegemony with its apparatus of race laws, the *gestapo* (political police), the wholesale arrest of prominent individuals, and a controlled press. "This", wrote a leading American journal (*The New York Times*), "This is the twilight of liberty in Central Europe." For another thing, it placed in Germany's power all the natural and industrial resources of her latest acquisition. Bohemia and Moravia gave her an area exceeding 18,000 square miles, a population of about 7 millions, large armament plants, and the gold reserves of the national bank; while Slovakia added nearly 15,000 square miles with a population of 2½ millions.<sup>1</sup> Above all, the aggrandizement of the Third Reich by the annexation of a non-Germanic people created an entirely novel situation. Hitherto Germany had appealed to the principle of self-determination in defence of her claim to incorporate adjacent lands occupied by the German race; and though her methods were brutal and overbearing, it was held in many quarters that she had something of a moral case. No shadow of justification, however, could be pleaded for the seizure of Czech soil; and the principle of self-determination was discarded once that it had served its purpose. By including millions of an alien nationality in the German Empire against their will and in violation of a

Reaction  
on world  
opinion.

<sup>1</sup> Carpatho-Ukraine, annexed by Hungary, had 4,200 square miles and ½ million inhabitants.

solemn pledge, Hitler had 'crossed his Rubicon.' The mask was openly dropped, and the Third Reich revealed itself as the true successor of the Reich which had dictated the Treaties of Brest-Litovsk and Bucharest.<sup>1</sup>

*Policy of  
Great  
Britain.*

Most of the Great Powers denounced the destruction of Czecho-Slovakia and refused to recognize its legality. Russia protested that no head of a State is entitled to abolish its independent existence as a State without the consent of his people, and therefore the act of the Czecho-Slovak president was not legally valid. In every country the feeling spread that Europe was "heading straight for anarchy." Great Britain ceased to put her trust in the virtues of 'appeasement', for it was manifest that no reliance could be placed upon any fresh assurances that came from the National Socialist rulers of Germany. Instead she embarked upon a momentous change in her foreign policy, which opened up another epoch in her relations with the Continent. In effect this change meant that the frontier of Great Britain was no longer the Rhine but any part of the Continent where aggression threatened: the age-old tradition of isolation which had kept her aloof from Central and Eastern Europe was now thrown to the winds. The historic pronouncements, in which was contained a declaration of the new policy, stated that Great Britain "has been united from end to end in a conviction that we must now make our position clear and unmistakable, whatever may be the result. We welcome the co-operation of any country, whatever may be its internal system of government, not in aggression but in resistance to aggression." As the first-fruits, guarantees were given to Greece and Roumania—and alliances were concluded with Poland and Turkey—which provided that "in the event of any action being taken which clearly threatens [their] independence, and which [their] Governments consider it vital to resist with their national forces, his majesty's Government will feel themselves bound to lend at once all the support in their power."<sup>2</sup> To any attempt at establishing a German hegemony over the Continent the peoples of Great Britain

<sup>1</sup> Under the threat of force Lithuania yielded Memel to Germany.

<sup>2</sup> Similar action was taken by France.

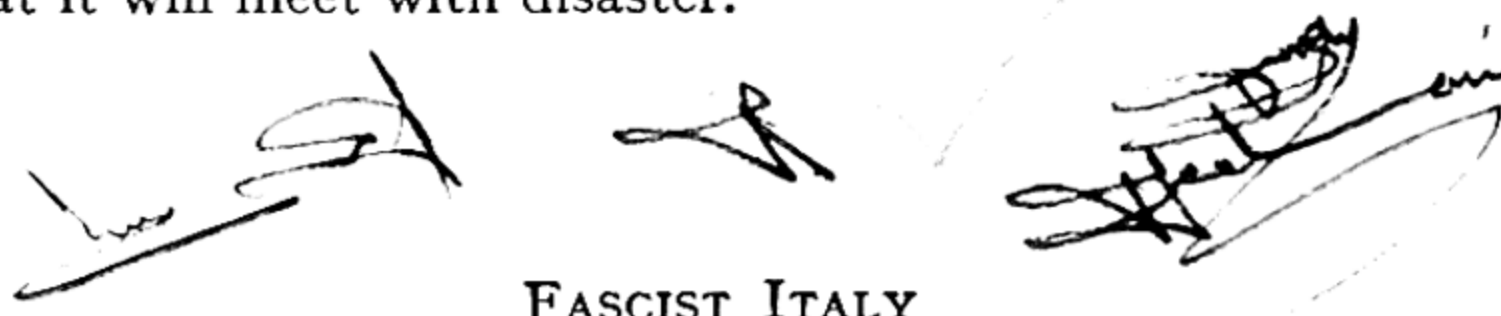
and France were resolutely opposed. They felt that their own security was directly involved in preventing the subjugation of the small nations and their virtual absorption in a 'Greater Germany.' Nor was there any country in Europe which did not feel itself menaced whether by the racial claim that all Germans must be brought within the Reich, or by the economic claim (*lebensraum*)<sup>1</sup> that even non-Germanic lands might be annexed or controlled by the Reich in the interests of its national economy. Although the German Government professed to regard Great Britain's 'Grand Alliance' or 'Peace Front' as a policy of 'encirclement', it was in reality a return to the policy of collective security against aggression—a belated recognition of the principle that "peace is indivisible." It fell short of the ideal embodied in the League of Nations since its basis was more restricted, nor did it automatically bind each party to come to the assistance of all the other contracting parties. Yet it avoided the defects of the League—the delays involved in its cumbrous procedure, the requirements of a unanimous vote before action could be taken, and the voluntary character of the military 'sanctions.' The new system bound the Western Powers to "lend at once" all their support to any State threatened by the Central Power. The latter, undeterred by this firm attitude, proceeded to formulate its demands upon Poland whose armed resistance terminated the series of bloodless victories which had hitherto marked Hitler's career. The signal was thus furnished for a European war (1939), in which Great Britain and France affirmed their resolution (in the words of the British prime minister) "to redeem Europe from the perpetual and recurring fear of German aggression, and enable the peoples of Europe to preserve their independence and their liberties."

During the war of 1914-18 the president of the United States delivered an address to Congress in which he said: *Destiny of National Socialism.* "This intolerable thing of which the masters of Germany have shown us the ugly face, this menace of combined

<sup>1</sup> I.e., 'living space' (see *supra*, p. 384). The encouragement of early marriages to promote an increase of population, and the importation of Italians, did not lend colour to the suggestion that Germany was overpopulated.



intrigue and force which we now see so clearly as the German power, a thing without conscience or honour or capacity for covenanted peace, must be crushed." After two decades 'this intolerable thing' again reared its head. The ultimate destiny of National Socialism was foreshadowed in the prediction of a German historian: "It is because National Socialism treats foreign nations as if they were Germans that it will meet with disaster."<sup>1</sup>



FASCIST ITALY

State of  
Italy in  
1919.

Widely-differing accounts are given of the condition of Italy in the years which immediately followed the war of 1914-18. The retrospective view presented by Fascist apologists is contained in a passage of this tenor: "It is unnecessary to resort to oratory. Whoever has an unbiassed knowledge of the situation in 1919 knows that Italy was politically divided, undermined by internecine strife and rival factions, depressed by an unjust treaty of peace, devoid of resources, with a totally disorganized economic system, and that she was rushing headlong on the road to complete anarchy." According to this view, Italy was rescued from the post-war anarchy and set on the path of a reinvigorated national life by the Fascist movement, which owed its origin to "the expression of a desire for order and stability felt by all classes." None of the other parties "seriously tackled the necessary reconstruction"; the Fascists alone had a clearly-defined programme to save Italy from ruin. "Their object was to establish a new political and social order, that might make it possible to undertake the heavy task of reconstructing Italy and addressing the nation towards a future of laborious peace." In a message to the British people (1924) the founder of the movement claimed that "Italian Fascism has not only been a political revolt against weak and incapable Governments, which had allowed State authority to decay and were threatening to hold up

<sup>1</sup> K. Heiden, *A History of National Socialism*.

the progress of the country, but also a spiritual revolt against old ideas which had corrupted the sacred principles of religion, of faith, of country."

An Italian historian of distinction<sup>1</sup> describes this picture of a nation slipping into anarchy as legendary. Italy, like every other country, suffered from 'post-war neurasthenia': "there were disturbances, strikes, riots—but there never occurred a breakdown in the economic machinery of the country." On the contrary, the years 1919–22 witnessed a steady increase in the number of joint-stock companies and their assets, in the amounts deposited in the banks, and in the yield of Government revenues. An Italian economist wrote at the end of 1921 that "Italy has decidedly improved her condition. Agricultural industry, the basis of our economic life, seems to be distinctly on the way to recover normal conditions; the deep depression consequent on war has passed away." He also alluded to "the greater steadiness and efficiency of labour and to the progress of foreign trade." The finance minister in the last pre-Fascist cabinet observed (1922): "The most important financial circles in the world are not pessimistic about our financial and economic situation. This is proved by the fact that offers of loans have been repeatedly made us by very important English and American bankers." Mussolini himself acknowledged in his paper (December 1920): "It is only honest to add that during the last three months the psychology of the working classes in Italy has changed profoundly. A clear symptom of the new state of mind is the comparative ease with which lately agreements have been reached after peaceful negotiations in the important trades of textiles and chemicals." Later (July 1921) he wrote: "To say that there still exists a Bolshevist peril in Italy is, for interested motives, to substitute fears for reality. Bolshevism has been vanquished."<sup>2</sup> It is clear from these quotations that there was no 'total disorganization' of

*Another picture.*

<sup>1</sup> G. Salvemini.

<sup>2</sup> This admission, made fifteen months before the Fascists gained possession of power, refutes Hitler's assertion (January 1939) that Fascism "succeeded in saving Italy from Bolshevism." In the elections of 1921 only 16 of the 535 successful candidates were Communists.

the economic system in Italy after the war, but a marked recovery towards normal conditions which inspired confidence in financial circles abroad. The menace of Communism was admittedly negligible, while the social effervescence which expressed itself in strikes, disorders and the occupation of factories, gradually subsided. The position of the Government, however, was seriously weakened by widespread resentment due to the belief that Italy's gains in the war of 1914-18 were not commensurate with those of her Allies.<sup>1</sup> A bone of contention was Fiume, which was claimed by Yugoslavia; and when the Italian Government ordered its troops to leave the city, the poet D'Annunzio took forcible possession of it (1919) and was only driven out after many months of occupation.<sup>2</sup> The reaction produced by these events was exploited by the Fascist party in recruiting supporters from the war veterans, who were taught to believe that the Government had 'mutilated' the victory. Thus in Italy, as in Germany, one of the sources of the revolutionary movement was the embitterment of the army politicians, who in Italy were disappointed with the fruits of victory and in Germany were mortified by the fruits of defeat. Yet it is probable that the political discontent, like the social effervescence, would have died down eventually but for the emergence of a dynamic personality whose avowed aim was to supersede the existing regime and put himself in its place.

Benito  
Mussolini.

Benito Mussolini in his early life pursued a varied career. He was an elementary school teacher, a mason who "carried on his shoulders heavy loads of cement" (to quote the picturesque language of a Fascist publication), a blacksmith who "bent iron bars on the anvil", a peasant who "turned up heavy sods with his spade." Exiled in Switzerland for Socialist propaganda, he became an ardent advocate of Italy's intervention in the war of 1914-18 and for this pur-

<sup>1</sup> Under the secret Treaty of London (1915) Italy's possessions in Africa were only slightly increased; but she made extensive acquisitions in Europe—the Trentino and the rest of the South Tyrol as far as the Brenner Pass, Trieste, Gorizia, Istria, Northern Dalmatia (except Fiume), the Adriatic islands, etc.

<sup>2</sup> In 1920 Italy gave up Dalmatia to Yugoslavia but received Zara, while Fiume became a Free State. In 1924 Fiume was annexed to Italy, and the adjoining districts were given to Yugoslavia.

الفناني بن جاني بن جاني



pose he founded a newspaper, the *Popolo d'Italia*. The entry of Italy into the conflict was, in his eyes, the first revolutionary manifestation of the Italian people—and not merely the means by which Italy was to annex a portion of Austrian territory. He wrote: "The war is here and it is a war of the people. The war of to-day will be the revolution of to-morrow." When peace was restored, he created in 1919 the *fasci di combattimento* (the Fascist groups of fighters) "to face two dangers—the conservatism of the Right, the destructiveness of the Left." Only by forming this organization, he declared, "shall we be able to act when the time comes." He professed that "the *fasci* are not, do not wish to be, cannot become a party." His insistence that Fascism "was not a party, but anti-party and a movement", doubtless served its purpose of attracting those who were alienated from the old parties, which were discredited by their alleged absorption in the struggle to obtain office as evinced in the rapid succession of ministries. The nebulous character of the Fascist programme also helped to win adherents among those whose imagination readily succumbed to the hypnotic influence of lofty-sounding generalizations. Thus Mussolini wrote in 1921: "Fascism is a great mobilization of material and moral forces. What does it aim at? We state without false modesty that it aims at governing the nation. What is its programme? The programme needed for ensuring the moral and material greatness of the Italian people." In the absence of any specific doctrine, the *fasci* were defined as "the provisional organization of all those who accept certain solutions of certain actual problems. We are solvers of problems." Though the founder of Fascism avoided formulating a theoretical programme, yet from the start two of his objectives were manifest and they remained distinctive features of the movement. One was the need of strengthening the authority of the State; the other was national syndicalism. These became the fundamentals entitling Fascism, in the opinion of its creator, "to rank as a political doctrine differing from all others." Of these twin postulates of the Fascist creed something will be said presently.

*Growth of  
Fascism.*

The first Fascist group (*fascio*) was instituted at Milan in March 1919. The movement soon spread to other towns and then penetrated the villages. Assuming a militant character, it drew recruits from combatants in the war, students and middle-class youth in general, who were attracted by the Fascist militia. Its members looked upon themselves as 'soldiers of the national revival', and wore the uniform of the black shirt. 'Squadrons of action' were organized on military lines, and they adopted as their emblem the bundle of rods (*fascies*) carried by the lictors in ancient Rome—the symbol of unity and authority. It was the existence of numerous and well-drilled forces that made Fascism a formidable movement, and enabled its leader to boast even in the early days that "in Italy there are two Governments." A miniature civil war ensued in which the Blackshirts assaulted the Socialists, while the constituted authorities professed neutrality. The Fascists intervened in strikes and claimed the credit for breaking them: they also indulged in "punitive expeditions" in order to intimidate their opponents. "In many places in Italy", relates a Fascist chronicler with pride, "acts of sound and justifiable violence gain the victory for Fascism." The Government showed itself unable or unwilling to cope with the lawlessness of the Fascists; but at the polls (1919), where the issue was not determined by 'sound and justifiable violence', they were completely eclipsed by the Socialists and by the 'Popular' party, which professed a form of Christian democracy and secured support in the country districts. Nevertheless the Fascists grew rapidly in numbers. Mussolini endeavoured to draw away the adherents of Socialism to his side by organizing syndicates (labour unions), for which he laid down the objectives in 1919. These included the control of industries by syndicates which showed themselves competent, an eight-hour day, a capital levy and inheritance tax, and economic councils armed with legislative powers and chosen by vocational bodies. Mussolini even supported the 'stay-in' movement in 1920, in which the workers refused to leave the factories.<sup>1</sup> At the first

<sup>1</sup> He denied that the occupation of factories was Bolshevism. H. W. Schneider, *Making the Fascist State*.

Fascist congress held in 1919 there were 22 *fasci* with seventeen thousand members; at the second (1920) 118 *fasci* with thirty thousand members; at the third (1921) 2,200 *fasci* with three hundred thousand members. The time was fast approaching when the Government, "which the Italian people have given themselves", would be ready to throw down the challenge to the Government 'at Rome.' In October 1922 the mobilization of the *fasci* was ordered, and the army of the Blackshirts commenced its famous march on Rome. A proclamation issued by the Fascist leaders announced that: "Fascism unsheathes its sword to cut the multifarious Gordian knots which complicate and depress Italian life." To avoid a civil war, the king summoned Mussolini to the capital and entrusted him with a mandate to form a ministry. Under a threat of dissolution the chamber of deputies granted the cabinet full powers.

The first objective of Fascism had been accomplished. The new forces brought forth by the war were installed in office, and they at once proceeded to take in hand "the thorough renewal of the country's political institutions." What this meant in actual fact was the abrogation of the system of responsible government, and its replacement by an authoritarian government vested in the person of the 'leader' (*duce*) of Fascism. The political structure of the Fascist State needs only a brief description. The *duce* has emerged as the dominant figure in a totalitarian regime, and in his person is vested the supreme direction of Italian policy. He controls the political, military and economic institutions of the kingdom; he is commander of the Fascist militia; he presides over the grand council of Fascism which is designed to perpetuate the domination of the Fascist party, because it is entrusted with the sole responsibility both for the composition of the governing body and the scope of its policy. The real source of the *duce's* power lies in his command of the party which he created, and which is unconditionally at his orders. The Fascist party is the political, and—through its militia—the coercive instrument of the Fascist regime. Its intervention in the national life is far-reaching, since it is directly represented on every organization to which

*The totalitarian State.*



official recognition is accorded. It has become the dynamic element in the State machinery and brings all the activities of the community, political, economic and cultural, within its orbit and under its discipline. In the Fascist State political liberty and its corollary, freedom of speech and action, are non-existent. A network of spies provides an effective curb on the free expression of opinion. Complete control is established over the press; and independent newspapers have been suppressed or required to submit to compulsory editorial and proprietary changes. All recognized associations are placed under the supervision of the Fascist party, and are required to "accept the conception of Fascism in theory and in practice." The democratic election of the chamber of deputies has been discontinued; in local government a State-appointed official (*podesta*) is substituted for the mayor of the commune; in the law-courts the jury system has been abolished. The compulsory use of a textbook on the origin, aims and institutions of Fascism is imposed on the schools in order that its principles may be instilled into the minds of the rising generation.

*Fascist  
view of  
democracy.*

Fascism had achieved the conquest of the State and become a 'regime.' It was now called upon to formulate a doctrine, for a faith must have a doctrine and Mussolini claimed that "Fascism is a faith—it is one of those spiritual forces which renovates the history of great peoples." Despite this grandiloquent assertion, Fascism in its main substance consists of a series of negations. It is anti-individualist, anti-democratic, anti-Socialist, anti-*laissez-faire*, and anti-pacifist. As the starting-point of an inquiry into the nature of Fascism, we may look first at a Fascist view of democracy.<sup>1</sup> It begins with an acknowledgment that the democratic State, originated by the French Revolution, marked a real advance on the arbitrary character of the 'patrimonial' State and of the 'police' State. It created the new principle of the 'juridical' State—that is, a State based on freedom and equality, in which the rights of the citizen acquired positive guarantees 'theoretically indestructible.' In its early stages the democratic State performed a beneficial

<sup>1</sup> A. Solmi, minister of justice in the Fascist cabinet.

function, but in the second half of the nineteenth century there began a process of degeneration due to political and social disturbances arising from the excesses of party factions and the bitterness of the class struggle. The democratic State, which proclaimed the equality and fraternity of man, was now revealed in its true light as a *bourgeois* State; it served the aims of the middle class and left the proletariat to the exploitation of industry, banking and capitalist agriculture. Hence arose a conflict which was corroding democratic institutions—a conflict between the State and the working class. The latter, dissatisfied with a mere participation in the choice of political representatives, was groping its way towards the conquest of power, that is, the ‘dictatorship of the proletariat.’ The former, for the sake of public order “which is always *bourgeois*”, was compelled to use repression, that is, it limited the freedom which constituted the very basis of the democratic State. Alternatively, it made futile efforts to placate the popular movement by such devices as universal suffrage, but these concessions stimulated ‘demagogical agitation’ and resulted in the degeneracy of the parliamentary system; more especially they fatally impaired the authority of the executive power, “which is compelled to desist from any efficient governmental action that goes beyond ordinary administration.”

The foregoing analysis leads to the conclusion that the democratic State maintained itself with difficulty in countries which were fortified by their wealth and deep-rooted traditions of government; but in other countries, where such elements of stability were lacking, it dissolved into Communist revolution (as in Russia) or into civil war (as in Spain). “The path of safety had to be pointed out once more from Rome.” It was symbolized in the *fascis* (bundle of rods) of the lictors expressive at once of the authority of the State and the union of all the forces of the nation. Just as the nineteenth century was the century of democracy and *laissez-faire*, so the twentieth century is the century of authority —“a century tending to the Right, a Fascist century.” These are Mussolini’s own words, for he has expounded “the

*The age of  
Fascism.*

doctrine which I have myself dictated."<sup>1</sup> He claimed that "if every age has its own doctrine, then numberless signs point out Fascism as the doctrine of our age", since "never before have the nations thirsted for authority, direction, order, as they do now." He predicted "a Fascist Europe drawing inspiration for its institutions from the doctrine and practice of Fascism." And elsewhere he repeated his conviction that "Fascism is bound to become the standard type of civilization of our century for Europe—the forerunner of European renaissance."

*Fascism*  
is: (i) *Anti-*  
*individual-*  
*ist.*

The keynote of the Fascist doctrine, explains its author, is its conception of the State viewed as the expression of the consciousness and will of the people. The State is omnipotent; it is all-embracing; "outside of it no human or spiritual values may exist." A pithy sentence of Mussolini's runs: "Everything in the State, nothing outside the State, nothing against the State." Fascism claims for the State an all-pervasive character which leaves no scope for independent action whether on the part of individuals or groups. The individual is recognized only in so far as his interests coincide with those of the State, and only in so far as he acts in line with the State; while no groups, political or economic, are tolerated apart from the State. In short the present age is that of the State, just as the past age was that of the individual. History records other examples of an omnipotent State identified with the person of an absolute ruler. It is the distinctive feature of the Fascist State, as also of its counterparts in Soviet Russia and National Socialist Germany, that it is a totalitarian State resting on the domination of one political party. The discipline of the Fascist party is the cement which holds together the framework of the Fascist regime. The combination of a totalitarian State absorbing all the energies and interests of the people, with a single political party upholding its exclusive claims, constitutes the essence of Fascism.

As an authoritarian regime Fascism is the antithesis of

<sup>1</sup> The account here given of the Fascist doctrine is based on Mussolini's writings: *The Political and Social Doctrine of Fascism*, *The Corporate State*, and *My Autobiography*.



democracy. The century of democracy was "the century of numbers, the century of majorities and of quantities"; but "we stand for a new principle in the world—we stand for sheer opposition to the world of democracy, to the world which still abides by the fundamental principles laid down in 1789." The Fascist political philosophy repudiates the basic principle of democratic government—the right of the majority to rule. In place of "the exaltation of numbers and of that mysterious divinity called 'the people'", it poses the figure of the 'leader' (*duce, führer*)—a euphemistic term for dictator. This is claimed to be 'the purest form of democracy' because, in substituting quality for quantity, it best reflected the conscious will of a people unified by an idea and imbued with a personality of its own. Whereas in democracy the executive of the State was reduced to a mere instrument of elected assemblies, Fascism "rescued it from the weight of faction and party interest and the egoism of classes", and restored dignity to it as representing the personality of the State.

The repugnance manifested by Fascism for democratic institutions is matched only by its aversion to the postulates of Marxian collectivism. It denies, firstly, the doctrine of historical materialism (that is, the economic interpretation of History) which explains the evolution of mankind exclusively in terms of economic development. It declares that political, not economic, factors make History and "give life to all the manifestations of collective life"—a thesis which, as stated in this extreme form, is at least more inaccurate than its converse. It denies, secondly, the doctrine of the class struggle, "which is the natural outcome of the economic conception of History"; and especially it denies that the class struggle is the principal agent in social transformations. It contemplates the fusion of all classes into 'a single ethical and economic reality'; and claims that this unity of classes is realized within the unity of the Fascist Corporate State, in which widely-different interests are co-ordinated and harmonized. Thus "having struck a blow at Socialism in the two main points of its doctrine, all that remains of it is the sentimental

(ii) *Anti-democratic.*(iii) *Anti-Socialist.*

aspiration, old as humanity itself, towards social relations in which the sufferings and sorrows of the humble will be alleviated. But here again Fascism rejects the economic interpretation of happiness as something to be secured through Socialism at a given stage in social evolution, when a maximum of material comfort will be assured to all."

(iv) *Anti-laissez-faire.*

While Fascism repudiates Marxian collectivism, it is "definitely and absolutely opposed to the doctrines of Liberalism", which in Fascist terminology means *laissez-faire*. The exponents of Fascism rightly contend that the age of *laissez-faire* is drawing to a close. "Liberalism is preparing to shut the doors of its temples, deserted by the peoples" who have been alienated by "the agnosticism it professed in the sphere of economics." In its rejection of *laissez-faire*, Fascism is in agreement with the current standpoint since the complexity of modern economic life, and the vast social problems created by economic depressions, have necessitated the intervention of the State in all countries alike. And inasmuch as Socialism represents a trend of thought rather than a rigid formula, all countries alike (whatever their form of government) are moving in the direction of Socialism towards an ever-increasing control of the economic system.

(v) *Anti-pacifist.*

Fascism is not only the negation of individualism, democracy, Marxian collectivism, and *laissez-faire*; it is also anti-pacifist, and herein lies the aspect which is the most significant for Europe at large. The challenge is thrown down to the concept of universal peace, which was embodied by a war-weary world in the League of Nations. Fascism professes to aim at 'realism' in politics, and asserts that the pursuit of peace runs counter both to past experience and "the tendencies of the present period of dynamism." Instead of peace it exalts war, for it teaches that war alone keeps up all the energies of man to their highest pitch, and sets the mark of nobility on those nations which have the courage to face it. "Equally foreign to the spirit of Fascism, even though they may be accepted for their utility in meeting special political situations, are all international or League organizations which,

as History amply proves, crumble to the ground whenever the heart of nations is stirred deeply by sentimental, idealist or practical considerations." Anti-pacifism develops a positive side when it is interpreted as 'a will to power.' Hence it is that Fascism is imbued with an imperialistic spirit as shown in the desire for expansion. It is claimed that this doctrine is best suited for a nation like the Italians, which "after lying fallow during centuries of foreign servitude is now reasserting itself in the world." The belief in the imperialistic mission of the Italian people involves the inculcation of certain spiritual values—discipline, the sense of duty, and self-sacrifice. "We are against the easy life", is the core of Fascist philosophy: life for the Fascists is 'a continuous ceaseless fight.' Fascist propaganda sets out deliberately to create an atmosphere of 'strong ideal tension', and to implant in the minds of Italians the conviction that they are a nation "which is marching on." The Italian Fascist is admonished that his pass-word should be to 'live dangerously'—to be prepared for every sacrifice, for every danger. Even the young receive a special training which begins in childhood and is designed to mould them to a Fascist pattern. From an early age they are grouped in organizations conducted on military lines and expressly intended to make of Italy a 'military nation.' Pope Pius XI condemned the Fascist Government for "entirely monopolizing the youth of the country from earliest childhood to maturity, and all for the exclusive advantage of a party and of a regime, on the basis of an ideology which often resolves itself into a veritable pagan State-worship."

The Fascist creed cannot be ignored or contemptuously dismissed because a large part of Europe succumbed to its insidious teachings, but no lengthy comment is needed to show the fallacies of this medley of distortions and half-truths. We may observe, however, that it is not so novel as its exponents appear to believe. In magnifying the State it poses a problem which had exercised Greek philosophers, and was given a classical setting in Sophocles's *Antigone*. In lauding war it revives a notorious German doctrine.<sup>1</sup>

*Fallacies  
of Fascism.*

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 286.



In exalting race<sup>1</sup> and embracing Anti-Semitism, it is a servile imitator of National Socialism. Above all, in criticizing democracy it follows a well-trodden path. The argument that the irresponsible ruler may be more truly qualified to represent the national interests than an elected assembly has a familiar ring. In essence it reproduces the language of Strafford and Laud during the personal rule of Charles I in the seventeenth century. For its more immediate ancestry we may turn to the doctrines expounded in czarist Russia in the closing decades of the nineteenth century;<sup>2</sup> Mussolini is the spiritual heir of Pobêdonostev. Whatever the shortcomings of the democratic State—and whatever degree of truth there may be in the aphorism that “democracy is a kingless regime infested by many kings”—it exists to serve the ends of man: to enrich the human personality by affording it scope for a free and ordered development. It does not turn the individual into an automaton with no independent impulses of his own, but respects his inalienable rights. It does not repress freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of political and social organization, and freedom from arbitrary arrest: all of which come within the category of “useless or harmful liberties”, which the Fascist State (in the words of its architect) “has curtailed.” The democratic State does not achieve “the unity of classes”, on which Fascism prides itself, by means of the admitted “severity which has to be exercised towards those who oppose” the abolition of their liberties. It does not aim at keeping youth—nourished on a diet of bellicose speeches—in a state of high moral tension, patriotic ecstasy and burning anticipation of great national glory. It does not exalt war nor transform the nation into a military camp with the discipline and mentality of the barracks. It does not seek to acquire dignity and prestige abroad by menacing gestures and ‘the shining sword.’ It does not leave the supreme issues of peace and war to depend upon

<sup>1</sup> In 1932 Mussolini said: “Race—it is a feeling and not a reality, 95 per cent. a feeling.” He continued to repudiate Anti-Semitism until 1938, when he initiated a series of repressive measures in order to bring Italy into line with Hitler’s Germany.

<sup>2</sup> *Supra*, p. 107.

the will of one person. These are the acid tests—and not the specious merits of a 'well-organized, centralized, unified' State—that must be applied when the choice is made between the democracies and the dictatorships. And it is improbable that the world will continue indefinitely half of it free and half of it enslaved to a reactionary political philosophy.

We must now describe the economic structure of the Fascist State, of which the basic concepts—derived from the syndicalist theories of the Italian labour movement—may prove to be more enduring than the political ideology of Fascism.<sup>1</sup>

*Economic structure of the Fascist State.*

The revolution in the system of government, which destroyed political Liberalism in Italy, was followed by a social revolution which extinguished economic Liberalism. Political Liberalism implies in essence political freedom; while economic Liberalism (or as it is more commonly termed *laissez-faire*) connotes economic freedom. There is no historic or organic relation between the two; for political freedom is not only compatible with, but is generally conditional upon, reasonable restraints on the freedom of economic enterprise. A democratic State like Great Britain has long abandoned in principle, and to an increasing extent in practice, the doctrine of *laissez-faire*. Hence, in repudiating an uncontrolled capitalist economy, Fascism is in harmony with the prevailing tendencies. It does not, however, seek to place the whole national economy under State direction. It recognizes private enterprise in certain branches of economic life, while it imposes State control or State management in others. The Labour Charter (1927) lays down that "private enterprise in the sphere of production is the most effective instrument and the one most consonant with national interests." Yet it adds that: "State intervention in economic activities arises when private initiative is lacking or inadequate, or when the political interests of the State are involved." The latter clause opens the door to a wide measure of State action

*Basic concepts.*

<sup>1</sup> Mussolini joined forces with the Syndicalists and incorporated their doctrines in Fascism. Cf. *supra*, p. 418.

which, if it is not Socialism, is at least the thin end of the wedge. Thus the banks and foreign trade are placed under the direct control of the Government; in addition, industries 'important for national defence' are brought within the orbit of Government undertakings, the stock being largely held by the State. Even in agriculture, small-scale industry and internal trade, where Fascism accepts the principle of private enterprise, two significant postulates are applied. First: that the employer is responsible for the direction of the enterprise but the worker is an active collaborator, and this "collaboration between the forces of production gives rise to reciprocal rights and duties." Second: that the private organization of production is "a matter of national concern." An elaborate machinery has been devised to give effect to these postulates in every part of the economic system. In order to define and co-ordinate the relations between capital and labour, the Italian people are organized on a vocational basis in syndicates. In order to regulate the nature and scope of production in the national interests, all the productive forces are knit together in institutions known as corporations. Together the syndicates and corporations provide the framework of the Corporate State, which represents the most notable contribution of Fascism in the field of politics and economics.

*The  
syndicates.*

The syndical organization of Italian economic life is designed to ensure discipline in the sphere of economy, just as the ubiquitous activities of the Fascist party ensure discipline in the sphere of politics. The official version explains how syndicalism promotes the collective interests of those engaged in production, employers and workers alike, inasmuch as it "harmonizes the interests of all social classes which are thereby protected in equal measure." This end is achieved not by the method of Individualism—a struggle between the organized forces of capital and labour; nor by the method of State Socialism—the imposition of bureaucratic control; but by the method of the Corporate State—the self-determination of producers acting in concerted agreement. In other words, the professed



aim of Italian syndicalism is to replace the class struggle between employers and workers by their harmonious co-operation based on the reconciliation of divergent interests. In accordance with this general conception, a law of 1926 provided for the representation of all forms of economic activities by occupational unions termed syndicates. The next year the promulgation of a Labour Charter defined the tenor of the Corporate State, and enunciated the principles that henceforth were to govern the relations of capital and labour. In every occupation there are formed two syndicates, one for the employers and one for the workers—except that in the case of the fine arts and liberal professions no distinction is made between employers and workers. Membership of the syndicate is not compulsory, nor is it obligatory for obtaining employment in a particular trade. The conditions which the unions secure for their members are automatically extended to non-members, and on this ground the latter are required to pay the syndical dues. An official status is conferred on but one syndicate of employers or workers in each occupation, even though it covers only a tenth of the total amount of employment; and the authorized syndicate is placed under the direct control of the Fascist party, in keeping with Mussolini's doctrine that "all economic organizations acknowledged by the Corporate State exist within the orbit of Fascism." The principal function of the hierarchy of syndicates, whether municipal, provincial or national, is collective bargaining. When the twin syndicates of employers and workers in each occupation, representing capital and labour, have reconciled their opposing interests in a collective labour contract, the latter becomes binding on all those engaged in the occupation whether or not they are members of the syndicate. This collective contract lays down precise rules on all aspects of labour relations, such as wage rates, hours of work, weekly day of rest, annual holidays with pay, indemnities on dismissal and disciplinary relations.

Fascist writers claim that the Corporate State (*Stato Corporativo*) is "the great contribution made by Italy under the guidance of Mussolini towards the solution of the greatest

*The Corporate State.*

social problems of our day. It shows a world torn by the class struggle, divided between the schools of thought represented by nineteenth-century individualism and Marxian collectivism, that it is possible for a modern State to harmonize apparently conflicting class interests." The class struggle—understood in the revolutionary sense of "the attainment of power through the elimination of a class"—is superseded by class collaboration on the basis of the syndicates through ways and means established by law. Disputes may arise between employers and workers, but they are settled by the process of discussion "on a plane of absolute equality." However the syndical grouping of producers, which rests on the demarcation between employers and workers, provides for twin associations in the different fields of economic activity. The syndicates are therefore bodies voicing the separate and often divergent interests of capital and labour, which need to be co-ordinated and harmonized. The next step was taken in 1934 to establish links between these interests by new administrative creations, which constitute the apex of the Fascist social regime. The connecting links are the corporations, which bring together employers and workers to co-operate on a footing of equality in the same association.

*The corporations.*

The corporations are defined as organs of the State, in which an equal number of the representatives of capital and labour sit together around a common table together with representatives of the Fascist party, and collaborate to direct production in such a way as to ensure that private enterprise does not act for the exclusive benefit of the owner but serves the public interest. They constitute the supreme economic organization of Italy. Each corporation comprises all the categories engaged in a given cycle of production—that is, producers of the raw materials, the processing industries, traders in the finished products, technical and scientific experts.<sup>1</sup> It has its own council, and the aggregate of the corporative councils forms the national council

<sup>1</sup> There are 22 corporations—8 for cycles of production embracing agriculture, 8 for industry and commerce, and 6 for services (professions, transport, etc.).

of corporations, which speaks for all corporate interests concerned in production.<sup>1</sup> The functions of the corporations are primarily advisory: they aim at achieving a planned economy which will "concentrate and direct national effort along channels consonant with national needs." "It is", said Mussolini, "the task of the corporations to regulate production, for we must not just make anything, anyhow. That is folly and leads to disaster." Through them Italy seeks to replace the *laissez-faire* economy of a past age "by a rationally organized system, in which private enterprise is shown the direction in which it can most profitably work in the collective interest." While the corporations advise the Government in its economic legislation over the entire range of production, distribution and exchange, they also determine prices and wages, authorize or prohibit new industries, prescribe conditions of apprenticeship, intervene in trade disputes, and in other respects control the economic life of the country. The exponents of 'Corporativism' are at pains to emphasize that the corporations, though they supersede economic Liberalism, do not establish State Socialism in the sense of the bureaucratization of economy. They imply a regulated, that is, a controlled economy; they introduce order in the sphere of economy; but they are not bureaucratic organs. The planning and regulation of Italian economic life are largely entrusted to the producers themselves acting through the machinery of the corporations, in which participate the representatives of every branch of economic activity. The notion of State organs, which are not bureaucratic but are moulded in the form of autonomous, self-governing corporations, is not peculiar to Fascism—as the example of Great Britain evinces—though in no other country is it extended to cover the whole field of economy. Yet in the Fascist Corporate State the degree of autonomy enjoyed by the corporations is considerably impaired by the fact that they are presided over by a minister of state, that their membership includes representatives of the Fascist

<sup>1</sup> The general management of the corporations is co-ordinated by the central corporative committee, which concentrates all the productive forces in the nation.



party, and that their decisions must be endorsed by the Government. While the basic conception of a national economic council, relieving parliament of functions for which it is not adapted, is one which other countries would do well to ponder, the Fascist pattern is clearly incompatible with free democratic institutions.

*Vocational  
representation.*

The economic organization of the Corporate State is considered to be, not a means in itself, but a means to an end. It foreshadows the political organization of a modern democracy "on the basis not of majority rule but of capacity rule, which entails as its corollary vocational instead of geographical representation" in the deliberative assembly. Vocational representation means that the electorate is organized according to occupation, and for such a purpose the syndical structure provides the requisite machinery. The first vocational chamber of deputies was chosen in 1929; a decade later it was replaced by a chamber of *fasci* and corporations. The programme of constitutional reform was forecast by Mussolini in the early days of the Fascist movement when he declared: "The life of a modern country is of formidable complexity, and the essential organs of our political system are inadequate for its needs. The existing forms of political representation cannot satisfy us; we want direct representation of all separate interests. The system of Government administration should be changed by setting up national technical councils elected by trade and professional and cultural organizations." In any event he was consistent in his view that in a totalitarian State, which recognizes only a single political party, the Italian chamber of deputies like the German *Reichstag* had lost its *raison d'être* and become an anachronism. It was an institution, he said, "alien to our mentality and to our creed as Fascists", since "it presumes the existence of a world we have overturned." The future will show whether the Fascist claim is well-founded that an institution based on a plurality of parties "belongs to a phase of History now left behind." None the less, if the Corporate State survives, its underlying principle of a national economy controlled and guided by professional corporative bodies may

exert a profound influence upon the political and economic evolution of democratic societies.

It is not surprising that the spirit of restlessness, the craving for action, the urge to impose one's personality on events, which are the distinctive features of dictatorships, should be marked traits of Fascist foreign policy. "I am all for motion", Mussolini once confessed; and his ambitions proved a disturbing factor in the sphere of international relations. We have already given an account of Italy's invasion of Abyssinia and its repercussions on the European situation. The dominating motive was political, that is, the desire to increase Italian prestige—"At last Italy has her Empire", was Mussolini's proud boast—but it was masked under an economic pretext that the Italian nation of 43 millions was "stifled within its narrow boundaries." Italy, it was represented, needed colonies to provide an outlet for "hundreds of thousands of her children deprived of work in the fatherland, and no longer enabled to emigrate abroad on account of the limitations imposed on immigration by foreign countries." It is true that the New World has ceased to afford an open door to the surplus inhabitants of the Old World, and this circumstance aggravates the economic difficulties of present-day Europe. Nevertheless, the plea that Italy was suffering from a redundancy of population became invested with an air of unreality, when her Government was at pains to encourage large families by the grant of bonuses and also took steps to repatriate Italians from abroad. That Italy herself contains the soil, on which her surplus people may find a living, was recognized in the official schemes of land reclamation which (Mussolini proclaimed in 1925) "shall give land and bread to millions of Italians to come." Marsh lands were drained, coastal areas developed, and the mountain sides protected from soil erosion by reafforestation. Thus if mass emigration to America was checked, its place was taken by internal migration which transferred families from congested districts to other parts of Italy or to the Italian colonies in North Africa. These developments re-

*Italy's  
colonial  
empire.*

duced the force of the contention that Italy needed more colonies as an outlet for her expanding population; it was therefore reinforced by the argument that the contraction of international trade and the pursuit of economic self-sufficiency made the assured access to raw materials for her industries a vital necessity—‘a question of life or death for a nation.’ In this respect the existing Italian colonies were considered inadequate. Italy came late into the colonial field, for in the closing decades of the nineteenth century she was absorbed in the task of building up a national State. Yet she obtained Eritrea on the Red Sea and Somalia on the Indian Ocean; while in 1911 a war with Turkey gave her possession of Libya in North Africa. Her colonial acquisitions in 1919, when the former German possessions in Africa were distributed among the victorious Powers, were small; and a section of Italian opinion—unmindful of the extensive gains in the Adriatic—believed that the country had been deprived of the fruits of victory. In consequence Italy professed to be one of the ‘unsatisfied’ nations, which any peace settlement is bound to create. It remains to be seen whether her conquest of Abyssinia will afford, as it has been confidently predicted, “a promising outlet for the overflowing energies of Italy’s rapidly growing population”—and whether Italians will show any alacrity to “fertilize with their labour” the land for which they have “spilt their blood.”

*Italy's  
conflict  
with the  
League.*

If the sole outcome of the war between Italy and Abyssinia had been the annihilation of an ancient African empire, it would have added another page to the history of colonial expansion and spoliation, but it would not have materially affected the balance of political forces in Europe. The conflict had repercussions far beyond the African scene, since it involved the authority and prestige of the League of Nations. Italy, pronounced the aggressor by the unanimous voice of the nations assembled at Geneva, was called upon to face “the economic siege decreed against her by fifty-two countries, which one single Government<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An Anglo-Italian Agreement in 1938 improved the relations of the two countries.



willed and imposed." The Italian people were taught to interpret this 'siege', not as a protest against wanton aggression, but as the thwarting of their legitimate colonial ambitions. It was variously attributed to the cupidity of 'those old and satiated colonial Powers', or to the enmity of capitalist countries which feared the Fascist Revolution because its new social order represented a quest for the 'higher social justice.' However the half-measures taken by the League, as we have already said, were more in the nature of a gesture than of coercion; their only effect was to demonstrate the futility of collective action, and to call into existence the 'Rome-Berlin axis.' Antagonized by the imposition of 'sanctions', the Fascist Government proclaimed its adhesion in 1937 to the Anti-Comintern Pact of Germany and Japan, and it also withdrew from the League. Notwithstanding these threatening portents, Italy after the annexation of Abyssinia now declared herself a 'satisfied nation', and professed her desire henceforth to be a factor for peace and stability in the world. Three years had not elapsed when she began to cast longing eyes upon the possessions of her French neighbour; and extravagant demands were raised in the Italian chamber of deputies and in the press. As a preliminary step she denounced in 1938 the treaty concluded with France in 1935.<sup>1</sup> Baulked by the French Government's firm stand, Italy shortly afterwards (1939) invaded and annexed Albania. Her action may have been intended partly to acquire compensation for Germany's gains in Central Europe, and partly to safeguard her position in the Adriatic in the event of a European war.

Whatever fate may attend the other achievements of the Fascist regime, one is likely to prove durable, namely, the treaty made between the Italian State and the Papacy in 1929. This historic agreement established the Vatican City "under special regulations, recognizing the Holy See as vested with full ownership therein and with exclusive and absolute power and sovereign jurisdiction." Thereby it

*The  
Vatican  
Treaty.*

<sup>1</sup> By this treaty France ceded to Italy territory in Africa and a share in the railway from Djibouti to Addis Ababa, while the Italians in Tunisia were granted the right to retain Italian nationality, Italian schools, etc.

'definitively and irrevocably' settled the 'Roman question', which arose in 1870 when the Papal State of Rome was annexed to the kingdom of Italy.

## (VII)

## OTHER EUROPEAN STATES

We have given above an account of the political upheavals which convulsed Soviet Russia, National Socialist Germany and Fascist Italy. Here we shall review the salient developments in other European countries.

*France.*

France emerged, after the downfall of Germany in 1918, as the dominant Power on the Continent. The new States, whose meteoric rise recalled the host of armed men whom Cadmus caused to spring from the soil by the sowing of dragon's teeth, naturally looked to France as their protector; and by rendering political and financial aid she sought to bind them closely to her. The chain of alliances with the small Powers in Central and Eastern Europe was one of the three lines of defence, which France constructed as an insurance against a revival of the German hegemony. Her second line of defence was the League of Nations, in which the more far-sighted French statesmen came to recognize a potent guarantee of national security through collective action. The third line was her understanding with Great Britain based on a common identity of interests, which linked the two Western democracies in union against a militant Germany. No incompatibility existed between these main objectives of French foreign policy; on the contrary they were interdependent. The small nations viewed the League as the bulwark of their integrity and safety; while Great Britain saw in it a more lasting basis for the maintenance of peace than in a system of rival military alliances. It was the fatal error made by the French people that in a crucial hour they failed to give whole-hearted support to the League, and when confronted with the supreme issue raised by the invasion of Abyssinia they "halted between two opinions." The efforts of the

League to check Italian aggression were sabotaged by the attempt of the French ministry of the day to ride two horses abreast. As a consequence the League, which alone was in a position to rally world forces against a renewal of German aggression, was reduced to impotence; the small States, disillusioned by this demonstration of political realism, placed their hopes of security in a policy of neutrality; and France was divested of the commanding position which she had enjoyed in the first decade after the war of 1914-18.

These developments, however, lay concealed in the womb of time. The immediate problem which faced the French nation was the restoration of the devastated regions. The ravages of the enemy occupation (1914-18) had inflicted deep wounds upon the sector which covered the north and north-east of the country; and if part of the damage was unavoidable when the territory was turned into a battlefield, it would seem that part was also deliberately done to cripple the industrial resources of France. The population of the occupied area fell from  $4\frac{3}{4}$  millions to 2 millions; nearly one-third of the houses, public edifices, factories and farm-buildings was demolished; all the coal pits and iron mines were destroyed; most of the soil under cultivation was damaged and the land lay almost completely bare of livestock. Those who surveyed the ruin of the once flourishing departments of France were enabled to understand the determination of the victors to exact reparation for the injuries they had sustained, and to take all possible measures against a recurrence of the calamity. This side of the picture is apt to be forgotten while the harsh terms imposed upon the defeated country are alone remembered. France was also harassed by a constitutional problem arising from the instability of her Governments: in the decade 1920-30 she had no less than a score of ministries. The explanation is to be found in the nature of the French parliamentary system which suffered from the opposite vice of a totalitarian State, namely, a plethora of parties. Indeed most European countries experienced the misfortune of having either too many political parties

*Domestic  
problems*



or too few. In the former case the instability of the administration brought discredit upon the parliamentary system; in the latter case there existed no opposition to serve as a check upon, or substitute for, the Government in power. In France the formation of a cabinet represented a compromise between the conflicting views of the groups pledged to its support; as a result the Government was usually weak, and except in a time of crisis it found difficulty in following a firm and consistent policy whether at home or abroad. Public opinion was increasingly irritated by the rapid alternation of ministries; and the Fascist and royalist factions were provided with specious material for their propaganda. A strong hand had been at the helm of the State in the later stages of the war of 1914-18. The premier was M. Clemenceau, who was inflexible in his determination to prosecute the struggle to a successful conclusion. He presided over the peace conference at Paris (1919), in which he pursued the single aim of placing his country in an impregnable position, but neglected to recognize that a more magnanimous treatment of the fallen enemy might have helped to heal the breach between the two neighbouring nations, and thus strengthened rather than impaired the future security of France. M. Clemenceau ruled France with vigour, and the opposition which was aroused against his administration made itself felt when in 1920 he failed to secure election as president of the republic in succession to M. Poincaré. The choice fell upon M. Millerand, who announced his intention to extend the powers of his office and take a personal part in the conduct of foreign affairs, which had now begun to assume a critical character.

*Foreign  
policy.*

The growing divergence of opinion over the treatment of Germany produced a serious rift in the Entente between France and Great Britain. The latter adopted a conciliatory attitude towards the Central Power. She was anxious to liquidate the war of 1914-18 and enable the German people to recover their economic strength, for if they had been her chief competitor before the outbreak of hostilities they had also been one of her principal customers. France, however, was not affected by Germany's economic

decline and she viewed the situation from a political angle. Her sole concern was security, and she was perturbed at the prospect of the recovery of her powerful neighbour. Although the prevailing trend of opinion in France favoured a policy of coercion, the conspicuous exception was M. Briand who co-operated with Great Britain in the effort to bring Germany back into the orbit of the European state-system. His concessions to the British view-point encountered resistance in the French chamber, and he resigned his office as premier in 1922. His successor, M. Poincaré, a former president of the republic, was an advocate of the strong hand and the 'old diplomacy' rather than conciliation and the 'new diplomacy' of personal contacts and conferences between statesmen. His determination to exact full payment of reparations from Germany led in 1923 to the French occupation of the Ruhr, in the face of British opposition. In addition, he encouraged a separatist movement in the Rhineland in the hope of forming a buffer State which would look to its western neighbour for protection. As we observed in an earlier chapter, the idea of creating a 'Middle Kingdom' between the two halves of Charlemagne's empire, which through the centuries have been severed by ineradicable hatreds, was a legacy of mediæval times. On one occasion only did the idea materialize for a brief moment, when in the fifteenth century Charles the Bold built up his short-lived Burgundian State. After his death it fell to pieces, and France and Germany have remained ever since either at war or in a condition of armed peace.

The intransigent policy pursued by M. Poincaré proved unsuccessful. The separatist movement became discredited owing to its failure to rally influential support in the Rhineland, while Germany completely suspended all payments of reparations. The French people reacted against methods savouring of the 'militarism' which the war of 1914-18 had been fought to extinguish; and in 1924 the *Bloc National*, composed of the parties of the Right, was defeated by the *Bloc des Gauches* consisting of Radicals and Socialists. M. Poincaré resigned; and the president of the republic

*Era of appeasement.*

(M. Millerand) was constrained to relinquish his position on the ground that he had infringed the non-partisan character of his high office. The new ministry reversed the foreign policy of its predecessor. It stood for a resumption of cordial relations with Great Britain, which implied leniency towards Germany, and for a return to collective action in place of unilateral action. Co-operation with Great Britain was facilitated by the advent of a Labour Government, with which the *Bloc des Gauches* found itself in political sympathy. The strained relations between the two countries had caused them to drift apart: their coming together again inaugurated an era of 'appeasement' in which the landmarks were the settlement of the reparations problem, the evacuation of the Ruhr and subsequently the complete withdrawal of the Allied forces from German territory, the Treaty of Locarno, the admission of Germany into the League of Nations, and the Briand-Kellogg Pact. Of these fruits of the policy of reconciliation, identified especially with the name of M. Briand who held the post of foreign minister in successive cabinets for a term of seven years (1925-32), we have spoken elsewhere. Continuity of office removed the danger that M. Briand's conciliatory policy might be torpedoed by one or other of the short-lived French cabinets. A signal illustration of the new spirit which was abroad in Europe was the passage of a law in 1927, by which the length of compulsory military service in France was to be reduced to one year.

*Battle of  
the franc.*

While foreign affairs steadily improved, the domestic horizon became clouded by an economic crisis which had its repercussions in the political sphere. France had difficulty in balancing her budgets, partly owing to the strain imposed on her finances by the cost of the war of 1914-18 and the reconstruction of the devastated regions, and partly owing to the disinclination of the French people to submit to heavy increases of taxation. Confidence in the stability of the currency was undermined, and an exodus of French capital ensued. The flight from the franc became so alarming that its exchange value was halved. One ministry after another failed to alleviate the situation; and in 1926





BRIAND (1862-1932)



M. Poincaré returned to office as head of a coalition ' Government of national union ' which included six former premiers. His efforts to win ' the battle of the franc ' were crowned with success, and the franc recovered its previous rate. Three years later occurred the great economic depression which affected France chiefly by reason of the results produced in other countries. In Germany it materially assisted in establishing the National Socialists in power, and so forced France to make an alliance with Soviet Russia and extend the term of military service to two years. In Great Britain it was responsible for the abandonment of the gold standard, which upset the currencies of the world and endangered the stability of the franc. The battle of the franc had to be fought over again, but this time it was a losing battle. The French Government endeavoured to retain the gold standard since a fresh devaluation of the currency, which had already suffered an immense depreciation, would inflict serious hardships upon those who lived on fixed incomes. Accordingly it attempted a policy of deflation, which meant lowering wages and salaries and prices, but the unpopularity of the policy thwarted its purpose. The impotence displayed by successive ministries in the face of the economic crisis, and their failure to balance national revenue and expenditure, impaired public confidence in the political system; and the unrest culminated in an explosion of popular fury which imperilled the existence of the republic. The ferment, which had been simmering for some time, was brought to a head by the disclosure of the Stavisky scandal in which prominent politicians were implicated. Stavisky was a financial adventurer who defrauded French investors by floating worthless bonds, and was alleged to have bribed highly-placed officials to support his swindles. The exasperation of the public caused an upheaval in Paris and in the provinces, and serious rioting occurred in February 1934. It was feared that the extremist elements on the Right would exploit the discredit into which the republic had fallen, and establish a Fascist dictatorship. To counter this danger, the General Federation of Labour staged a one-day general strike as



a demonstration against any attempt to overthrow the republic. M. Doumergue, a former president, was called upon in the capacity of premier to handle the crisis and restore public confidence. He put forward proposals for constitutional changes designed to give stability to the executive, but they fell on stony soil because French opinion was averse to arming the executive with new powers except in a national emergency.

*The  
'Popular  
Front.'*

Although France had successfully weathered the storm, the activities of the Fascist and royalist groups were a warning to the parties of the Left that the safety of the republic was threatened. United by a common sentiment the Radical Socialists, Socialists and Communists combined to form a 'Popular Front' which was intended to "place French liberties beyond the reach of Fascism." At the elections of 1936 the parties of the 'Popular Front', which had supported each other in the contest, gained three-fifths of the seats and so obtained a majority in the chamber. M. Blum, the leader of the Socialist party, became the head of a ministry pledged to a programme of extensive social reforms. The wave of excitement, with which the working class greeted the triumph of its cause, produced one of those inexplicable mass movements which as a rule are dangerous only when they are not handled with tact and discretion. With lightning rapidity an epidemic of 'stay-in' strikes broke out all over France, in which the workers occupied factories and stores without violence or damage, and announced their intention to stay there until their demand for higher wages and improved conditions had been met; it is estimated that at one time the number of 'stay-in' strikers amounted to a million. The premier, acting the part of a conciliator, negotiated an agreement under which the strikers undertook to return to work while the employers conceded an increase of wages, a forty-hour week, annual holidays of two weeks with pay, and (in certain industries) collective labour agreements. Legislation was enacted embodying the forty-hour week, paid holidays and the right of collective bargaining, and the strike fever subsided. The fiscal changes effected by the 'Popular Front' ministry

were not less momentous. Budget deficits, the decrease in the tourist traffic, the decline in the export trade, the growth of unemployment, and the flight from the franc—all combined to bring irresistible pressure to bear upon the administration; and in 1936 it was constrained to abandon the gold standard and devalue the franc. Another important measure was the nationalization of the Bank of France in order to take its control out of the hands of the financial interests. The governing board ceased to be elected by the two hundred largest shareholders; instead the Government appointed twelve members, bodies representing industry, commerce, agriculture and consumers submitted to the Government recommendations for nine members, and the stockholders chose the remaining two members. Financial stringency forced M. Blum to resign in 1937 after thirteen months' tenure of office, owing to the refusal of the senate to grant him powers to legislate by decree 'for the recovery of public finance.' Another succession of short-lived cabinets followed until the gathering of the war clouds on the horizon (1939) produced a strong executive under M. Daladier. In the face of the growing menace across their borders the French people showed their capacity for subordinating party strife to the supreme interest of national security.

Once more the international drama completely over-  
shadowed domestic problems. The ascendancy which France  
enjoyed in Europe for a decade and a half (1918-33) had  
been destroyed in the thirties by the resurrection of Germany  
as a military power, by acute internal dissensions, and by  
the tortuous handling of the Abyssinian episode. The  
crux of the situation abroad lay in the strained relations  
between France and Italy. The latter claimed possession  
of Djibouti, the Red Sea port of French Somaliland; she also  
demanded a special status for the Italians settled in Tunisia  
with a view to keep alive their political connexion with  
the country from which they were sprung; and these colonial  
disputes were aggravated by the clash of conflicting ide-  
ologies, for the Fascist regime was the antithesis of the  
principles enshrined in the French Revolution of 1789.

*Franco-  
Italian  
relations.*

The friction between the two Latin nations drew Italy nearer to Germany, and with the rise of National Socialism there developed the likelihood of an Italian-German alliance on the basis of a common ideology. To win Italy back to the fold, France concluded an accord with her in 1935 "relative to the settlement of reciprocal interests in Africa." By it Italy obtained in Africa frontier rectifications, cessions of territory and economic advantages; while France secured a progressive change in the status of Italians in Tunisia. Relying upon the benevolent neutrality of the French Government, Mussolini soon revealed his ambition to create an Italian Empire. The invasion of Abyssinia precipitated a conflict with the League of Nations, in which the French ministry, torn by divided loyalties, tried to keep on good terms with both sides so as not to jeopardize the understanding with Italy or the friendship with Great Britain. These tactics not only produced a state of tension in Anglo-French relations, but they also shattered one of the main bulwarks upon which France depended—the system of collective security. In turn, this destroyed another of her bulwarks—her alliances with the small States. Moreover, Germany's military occupation of the Rhineland in 1936—itsself a direct consequence of the frustration of the League—was followed by the construction of the Siegfried line of fortifications, the counterpart of the Maginot line along the French frontier. In view of the possibility that the Central Power might now be strong enough to resist a break through on the western front, while she subjugated her neighbours on the eastern front, it seemed as though France was no longer able to uphold the *status quo* in Europe established by the Treaty of Versailles, nor even maintain her own position. Confronted with a militant Germany whose unbridled ambitions placed all her neighbours in imminent peril, France recognized that her safety rested, as it had done twenty-five years previously, upon the closest collaboration with her British ally. Once again, in 1939 as in the war of 1914-18, the two Western democracies stood shoulder to shoulder.

Spain.

✓ Spain did not participate in the war of 1914-18, but it



was her fate to undergo the more terrible experience of a civil war. The train of events which led up to the catastrophe can be traced to the traditional antagonism between the army and the civil power. The army officers were organized in so-called 'committees of defence' (*juntas de defensa*), and every infantry officer was required to be affiliated to an army committee. The military *juntas* were the real rulers of Spain, for they interfered with the Government and created an *imperium in imperio*. Their *pronunciamientos* or manifestoes kept the country in a state of unrest, and produced a revolutionary temper which was incompatible with orderly constitutional development. Eventually General Primo de Rivera, inspired by the example of Mussolini, issued a manifesto in 1923 demanding the dismissal of the ministry. King Alfonso appointed him president of a military directory, which superseded the civil administration and ruled without a parliament. The military dictatorship continued for seven years, during which the country was governed by the army. In 1930 the king dismissed the dictator, but his subjects had been alienated by the suspension of the constitution, and the municipal elections held in the following year returned a republican majority in the provincial capitals. The king accepted the verdict and withdrew from Spain. The monarchy was abolished, and the new constitution laid down that "Spain is a democratic republic", that "the Spanish State has no official religion", and that "Spain renounces war as an instrument of national policy."

The young republic steered a troubled course between the contending forces of revolution and reaction, whose conflict grew more and more embittered. The separatists in Barcelona proclaimed the independence of Catalonia (1934), but the movement collapsed; the extreme labour groups called a general strike; the anti-clerical elements made attacks upon the Church. Yet the temper of the Spanish nation as a whole was moderate, and it is probable that the effervescence which inevitably accompanies a political upheaval would have subsided. It is noteworthy that the general election of 1936, which was a victory for

Internal  
dissen-  
sions.

the 'Popular Front' parties, brought into office a non-Socialist administration. The Left Republicans exceeded the Socialists and the scanty number of Communists combined, and it was they who mainly formed the new cabinet. Some of the leaders of the Right parties, disappointed at the verdict of the electorate—in conjunction with the army chiefs who feared that the curb on their political activities would extinguish their influence—plotted a military rising, which caused an explosion of popular violence. In parts of the country there occurred outrages such as the burning of churches; and the prevailing disorder culminated in the assassination of an adherent of the Government, followed in retaliation by the murder of a leader of the Right. General Franco, who had been relieved of his post as chief of the general staff for complicity in the projected rising, escaped to Spanish Morocco and assumed charge of the military revolt which broke out in July 1936. In distributing the blame for the catastrophe, a Spanish historian<sup>1</sup> wrote: "Right and Left alike carried on an abhorrent policy. Crimes were committed without respite. Marxist murderers, Fascist murderers and Anarchist incendiaries spread unrest and sowed hatred." He held that the greatest responsibility rested with those who gave the signal for insurrection. "All the outrages against people and property would be as nothing compared with the horrors of civil war."

Civil war.

The Spanish civil war was fought with the sustained ferocity that seems peculiar to fratricidal strife. The legitimate Government repressed the movement in Madrid and Barcelona, and its opponents established their own administration at Burgos. On the side of the loyalists were the progressive elements among the middle class and the peasantry, together with the industrial workers. On the side of the insurgents were ranged the army (for the most part), the Fascists, the monarchists, the landowning aristocracy, the Catholic Church hierarchy, and other conservative elements. The Basque nationalists were loyal, although they were both conservative and Catholics, because of their democratic

<sup>1</sup> A. Mendizabal, *The Martyrdom of Spain*.

tradition and their desire for regional autonomy. The adhesion of the Basque shipowners and iron and steel manufacturers refuted the view that the struggle lay between Fascism and Communism. Indeed, it is estimated that the total number of Communists in Spain only amounted to fifty thousand. One of the deplorable features of the struggle was the merciless treatment which each side meted out to its adversaries: it is stated that there was little taking of prisoners, and the wholesale massacre of political opponents recalled the worst excesses of the reign of terror during the French Revolution. Beneath the thin veneer of civilization it seemed that the cruelty and ruthlessness of the jungle still held sway in the twentieth century. The scales were weighted heavily against the legitimate Government, and it is surprising that it was able to offer so stout a resistance in a very uneven contest. The insurgents were fortified by the support of Italy and Germany who supplied them with forces, artillery, munitions, planes, and technicians. The loyalists drew aid from Russia; yet their resources in military equipment and planes were markedly inferior, and they were also handicapped by the blockade of their seaports. Thus Spain became, like Germany in the Thirty Years' War, the battleground for the conflicting ideologies which had disrupted the Continent—with the profound difference that the issue lay, not as in the seventeenth century between two forms of religion, but between two systems of government: democracy and totalitarianism. This aspect of the civil war aroused apprehension in Europe that the area of the conflict might be extended by drawing other countries into the maelstrom. To obviate this peril, a non-intervention agreement was concluded between nearly thirty European Governments, in which they undertook to refrain from assisting either side in the Spanish conflict. However, no international pact was considered binding by the totalitarian States, which had already progressed far along "the primrose path of treaty violation"; and from the outset flagrant breaches made the non-intervention agreement "a mockery and a failure." It favoured the insurgent leader who obtained abundant supplies from Italy and Germany, while



the legitimate Government was cut off from making purchases of arms and munitions in those countries which observed the agreement. The capture of Barcelona by the insurgents in January 1939 was followed two months later by the capitulation of Madrid, which had been besieged since November 1936. This brought the Spanish civil war to an end after a duration of nearly three years, in which the loss of life ran into many hundreds of thousands. ✓

*Turkey.*

One of the unexpected effects of the war of 1914-18 was the re-birth of Turkey. For a century Turkey had been in a state of decline, 'the sick man of Europe'; and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire was only averted by the rivalries and jealousies of the Great Powers. The revival was due to the shock administered by the Greek occupation of Smyrna (1919) and the Treaty of Sèvres (1920). The Turks found themselves stripped of the whole of Thrace, and the historic city of Constantinople was temporarily placed under international control. The terms were accepted by the Turkish Government, but rejected by the Nationalist party under the leadership of Mustapha Kemal who established a rival Government at Angora in Asia Minor. A shattering victory over the Greeks transformed the military situation, and the Turks were able to extort far more favourable terms from the Allies in the Treaty of Lausanne (1923). They were allowed to retain Constantinople and Eastern Thrace in Europe, and Anatolia (including Smyrna) in Asia Minor, comprising a total population of 16 millions. They were severed from the provinces over which they had ruled for centuries—Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia and Arabia; but Mustapha Kemal wished to build a national State and did not resist the break-up of the old Ottoman Empire.

*The  
Turkish  
Revolution.*

The way was now prepared for the Turkish Revolution which refashioned the political, social and economic structure of Turkey on lines designed to give the Turkish people a European outlook. Its architect was the saviour of his country, Mustapha Kemal, who subsequently assumed the name of Kemal Atatürk (Chief of the Turks). After his resounding victory over the Greeks, he proceeded to take

in hand the task of creating a modern State out of the ruins of a mediæval theocracy. His programme was laid down in the six principles of 'Kemalism', which were represented by six white arrows on a red ground on the party standard of the People's party. The first was republicanism. The monarchy was abolished, and Turkey was proclaimed a republic with Kemal Atatürk as its first president. The second was nationalism. Every citizen was a Turk so long as he lived within the national frontiers, spoke the Turkish language, received a Turkish education, and "makes the national ideal his own." The third was 'Populism.' This was defined in the words: "Sovereignty springs from the people." The fourth was 'Etatism.' In order to promote the economic development of the country, State control over private enterprise (supplemented by Government undertakings) was applied to transport, mines, public utilities and industries. The plan of industrialization involved the erection of Government establishments for various manufactures, such as cotton mills, wool and rayon factories, steel works, etc. The fifth was secularism. The Turkish State was divested of its semi-theocratic character with the abolition of the office of caliphate. Under the monarchy the sultan was both temporal sovereign and religious head (caliph), but the republic had no official religion and assumed a wholly secular complexion. The sixth was 'Revolutionism.' The programme of the People's party expressly stated that: "In the administration of affairs of State the party does not hold itself bound by the principles of gradual progress and evolution." It was in accordance with the last principle that sweeping changes were carried out as part of the process of turning an Oriental people into a Westernized nation. The reforming zeal of the eighteenth-century, 'benevolent despots' was recalled in the strenuous activities of a masterful personality, who wielded the autocrat's pen of which Schiller speaks: "O! for a pen, and the world is created anew." The wearing of the fez and turban, which had something of a religious significance, was forbidden; the Turks adopted the head-dress of Europeans, thus indicating that they belonged to the West and not to the East.

Another visible manifestation of the process of 'Westernization' was the substitution of Sunday as the weekly day of rest in place of Friday which is the Moslem Sabbath. Polygamy ceased to be tolerated. Women were emancipated; they abandoned the veil, and were given political and social equality with men. The franchise was extended to them in 1934, and in the elections of the following year seventeen women were returned as deputies to the assembly. A far-reaching reform was the compulsory introduction of a new Turkish alphabet written in Latin characters instead of the Arabic letters.

*Foreign  
policy.*

The renaissance of Turkey must be attributed in a large measure to the personality of her ruler. When he declared to the British ambassador, "If I die there are a thousand Turks who can take my place", he received the answer: "Excellence, vous exagérez mille fois." Under his direction Turkey was constituted an authoritarian State, ruled by a Government based on the one-party system—the People's party being the only political organization allowed to function. It was denied, however, that the Turkish State was totalitarian like Italy, Germany and Soviet Russia, on the ground that it permitted a wide field of initiative in educational, cultural and social activities. In any event, Turkey avoided taking up an aggressive attitude in her relations with other countries. The request which she made to the Great Powers for the revision of a part of the Treaty of Lausanne, by the pacific and legal method of a conference, stood in marked contrast with the example set by Germany of unilateral repudiation. The Straits Convention at Lausanne (1923) demilitarized the zone of the Straits (the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles), and established an international commission to enforce this provision. As a result of peaceful negotiations the Montreux Convention (1936) abrogated the Lausanne Convention, by restoring to Turkey the right of fortifying the Straits and abolishing the international commission. Turkey was also authorized to close the Straits to warships of other countries when she was at war or threatened by aggression. In war-time belligerent warships were excluded from the Straits, unless they were acting under the



authority of the League of Nations or under a regional pact to which Turkey belonged. Merchant vessels were permitted to pursue their trade freely in peace and war. In conclusion it may be remarked that the relations between Turkey and Greece became intimate, while the good will of Great Britain was secured when the old Turkish policy of encouraging pan-Islamism and fishing in the troubled waters of Arab and Indian politics was wisely abandoned. In 1939 the seal was put upon the revived Anglo-Turkish friendship by the conclusion of a formal treaty of alliance.

Whatever may be the racial affinities of the present and *Greece.* former inhabitants of Greece, they share at any rate a common tradition in their indulgence in *στάσις*. Modern Hellas still remains a prey to the internal dissensions which largely contributed to bring about the ruin of Ancient Hellas. Party strife among the Greek people was not confined to making changes in the political complexion of their government; it involved the very form of the government itself. As will be seen, Greece alternated between a monarchy and a republic, and the disturbed course of her history was marked by a series of political escapades which kept the country in a state of perpetual ferment. For one brief moment there dawned upon the Greek nation the vision of a Greater Greece, with the coveted prize of Constantinople to revive the glories of the Byzantine Empire. In Venizelos was found a statesman who had the ear of the Western Powers. He espoused their cause during the war of 1914-18 in order to achieve his territorial ambitions, but his policy of intervention on the side of the Allies brought him into collision with King Constantine who wished to remain neutral. Finally in 1917 the Entente Powers compelled Constantine to abdicate the throne. He was succeeded by his second son, Alexander, who summoned Venizelos to form a cabinet. Greece joined the Allies and in the last phase of the war she co-operated with them in the attack upon Bulgaria, which compelled the latter to sue for an armistice. Venizelos reaped immense gains in the Treaty of Sèvres, yet his triumph proved short-lived. In the

same year (1920) King Alexander died, and a plebiscite decided in favour of the recall of his father. Misfortune dogged the steps of the restored monarch, who was destined to end his days in exile. The dream of an Hellenic Empire was rudely shattered after many months of war between the Turks and the Greeks, when the former captured Smyrna and drove the enemy into the sea. The Greeks were forced to evacuate Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace, and above all their chance of winning Constantinople was irretrievably lost. The Greek inhabitants of the Ottoman territories were exchanged for the Turks who resided in Greece; and an extensive scheme of land settlement was carried out in Greece with the financial aid of the League of Nations.

*Political  
changes.*

The army and the people turned upon the king, who was held responsible for the disaster which had overtaken them. In 1922 he again abdicated—on this occasion in favour of his eldest son, George II, who withdrew from the country the next year. A plebiscite was held to determine the form of the constitution, and a majority voted on behalf of a republic (1924). Subsequently an attempt was made by General Pangalos to set up a military dictatorship (1926), but his *coup d'état* did not meet with any success. Venizelos resumed office as premier in 1928 for the space of four years. He encountered opposition from the royalist parties which refused to accept the popular verdict; and at length one of these parties came into office. The apprehension that a restoration of the monarchy was imminent provoked a military and naval insurrection in 1935. Venizelos was induced to accept the leadership of the movement, though in spite of his prestige the revolt speedily collapsed. Another plebiscite had to pronounce on the fate of the republic, and it decided in favour of monarchy. King George II was recalled to Greece and shortly afterwards death removed from the scene the two principal protagonists of the Greek drama—Venizelos the republican leader, who had acquiesced in the king's return; and General Kondylis the king-maker, who was deceived in his hopes of forcing his own policy upon the king for whose recall he was mainly responsible. In 1936 Greece joined the growing ranks of the dictatorship countries

when the premier, General Metaxas, established an authoritarian regime, dissolved the political parties, and ruled the nation without a parliament. His administration was marked by social measures, such as the institution of an eight-hour day in industry, an increase of wages, compulsory arbitration in labour disputes, and the prohibition of strikes and lock-outs. Whether the Greeks will submit permanently to the loss of their liberties in return for a 'strong' Government, the future alone can disclose.

The resurrection of Poland in 1918 redressed the wrong *Poland.* which had been done to her when she was partitioned by her neighbours in the eighteenth century. In the first years of its existence the new State seemed to have inherited the turbulent traditions which had been largely responsible for the extinction of its predecessor. It was involved in quarrels on every side—with Germany over Upper Silesia, with Czecho-Slovakia over the duchy of Teschen, with Lithuania over Vilna, and with Russia over the Ukraine. Eventually the fate of Upper Silesia was determined by a plebiscite; the city of Teschen was assigned to Poland, and the coal mines and railway of the duchy to Czecho-Slovakia; Vilna was seized by Poland; and the Russians after defeating the Poles and driving them to the gates of Warsaw retreated, and in the Treaty of Riga (1920) conceded a far more favourable frontier than that devised by the peace conference at Paris (1919). At home the cohesion of the Polish State was gravely impaired by the violation of the rights of minorities, whose position had been guaranteed by Poland as the condition of her restoration. Nor did the Poles achieve tranquillity in the sphere of domestic politics. They proved unable to make a success of the democratic regime, which was overthrown in 1926 when Marshal Pilsudski—the Polish national hero and a former president of the republic—became virtual dictator after forcing the resignation of the president and the cabinet. Pilsudski did not become head of the Government, but until the day of his death (1935) he remained the 'unofficial dictator' and real ruler of Poland. His proposals to strengthen the executive



at the expense of the legislature failed to secure the necessary two-thirds majority in parliament until the year 1935, when the new constitution made *de jure* what had existed *de facto* for the previous nine years. In addition, the system of parliamentary representation was changed by a fresh procedure under which candidates were selected by electoral bodies consisting of representatives of the municipal councils, chambers of commerce, professional organizations and labour unions. The institution of an authoritarian regime after the Fascist model was foreshadowed in the formation of a new party, the 'Camp of National Unity', which was intended to become the sole political party. It advocated a policy of compulsory 'Polonization', which aroused the apprehensions of the numerous minorities. Thus during the two stormy decades of her existence Poland—like the other 'succession States' established on the ruins of the empires wrecked by the war of 1914-18—was harassed by imperialistic ambitions, anti-democratic developments and racial feuds. The internal situation grew dark and troubled until it was overshadowed by the German threat to Poland's independence and territorial integrity.

*Foreign  
policy.*

For centuries it had been Poland's mission to serve as a buffer State in Eastern Europe between the Teutonic and Slavonic races. So long as she was strong she fulfilled this mission, but when she grew weak her neighbours united to destroy her. After her restoration Poland resumed her historic role, of which the prestige was balanced by the latent peril. For different reasons she was estranged from both Russia and Germany—from the former since she feared the Bolshevik contagion; from the latter because of Danzig and the 'Polish Corridor' which severed East Prussia from the rest of Germany. Her natural ally was therefore France, who dreaded the spread of Bolshevism and the recuperation of Germany, and had always sympathized with the cause of Polish independence. Accordingly the two countries concluded an alliance in 1921 promising to support one another in the event of unprovoked aggression, and French loans were made for military objectives. With the recovery of Germany the position of Poland became extremely delicate.

She endeavoured to steer clear of military combinations and rival ideologies, to pursue a temporizing policy, and to avoid compromising herself with either of her powerful neighbours. In 1932 she entered into a non-aggression treaty with Russia, in which each agreed not to attack the other nor to support an attack made by a third party. Two years later she concluded a ten-year non-aggression pact with Germany, in which both undertook not to have recourse to war. This pact was understood to mean that the question of the ' Polish Corridor ', which had excited intense feeling in Germany, would be shelved for ten years. Moreover, in conjunction with the Russian treaty, it seemed to safeguard Poland against the nightmare that oppressed her—the danger that her territory would once again become the cockpit of Europe. Events, however, were to show that National Socialist ' pacts ' were only intended to ward off danger in one quarter while accounts were settled in another. After Austria and Czecho-Slovakia and Memel had been annexed, Germany proceeded to formulate her demands upon her Polish neighbour; by rejecting them the Poles became the first nation to resist the aggression of the Third Reich. In April 1939 Poland accepted the offer of Great Britain and France for a defensive alliance; on September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Polish territory; two days later the Western Powers, in fulfilment of their pledges, declared war on the German aggressor.

Belgium's heroic resistance to the violation of her neutral- *Belgium*  
ity raised the war of 1914-18 from the level of clashing nationalist ambitions and economic rivalries into a crusade for the sanctity of international agreements and the rights of the small nations. Her treatment during the enemy occupation served as an object lesson of what a German victory meant. " The career of brutality embarked upon by the German invaders in an endeavour to break the spirit of the Belgian people will long remain a symbol of the meaning and purpose of modern warfare. The pillaging and burning of homes, and the deportations and indiscriminate killing of civilians, were coolly ordered and carried out by a staff and soldiery to whom war meant ruthlessness."

After the cessation of hostilities the energies of the country were consumed in repairing the ravages of war, and the work of economic rehabilitation was accomplished with rapidity. Two main problems now confronted Belgium. One was the language question. Linguistically the Belgian State is not homogeneous—French is spoken in the Walloon provinces in the South, which contain about half of the total population, while Flemish is spoken in the Flemish provinces in the North. During their occupation of Belgium the Germans had encouraged a separatist movement, designed to destroy the union between the two ethnic divisions of the kingdom by cutting Flanders loose from the connexion; and though the attempt did not succeed it created a breach between the Walloons and Flemings. The agitation for the equal status of the Flemish and French languages had political repercussions and affected the fate of cabinets. To compose the dispute, a series of concessions were made whereby Flemish became in the Flemish-speaking provinces the official language of the administration, courts of law, and schools. Another problem concerned Belgium's international status. This was changed after 1918, for Belgium wished to have the right to make alliances for her protection since the international guarantee of her neutrality had been treated as a scrap of paper. Accordingly the treaties made for the neutralization of Belgium were formally abrogated, and she entered into an alliance with France. However the recovery of Germany and the collapse of the League of Nations induced Belgium, in common with other small nations, to seek safety by avoiding any commitments which might bring down upon her the wrath of her powerful neighbour. Belgium therefore sought to return to her previous status of neutrality. In 1937 she was released by Great Britain and France from the obligations which she had contracted under the Treaty of Locarno, and at the same time the British and French guarantees of her territorial integrity remained unaffected. Thereupon Germany gave an undertaking to respect the inviolability of Belgium, so that her international status approximated to that which she possessed down to 1914.



Hungary emerged from the war of 1914-18 only a shadow of her former self. The Treaty of Trianon (1920) deprived her of over two-thirds of her territory, and the nationalities which she had scorned in the days of her greatness now entered into her heritage. She was forced to surrender Transylvania to Roumania, Croatia to Yugoslavia, and Slovakia to Czecho-Slovakia. Her population was reduced from nearly 21 millions to 7½, of whom 6½ were Magyars, while about 3 million Magyars were placed under alien rule. Her union with Austria was dissolved, and her king, the wearer of the 'holy crown of St. Stephen', was debarred from the throne by the opposition of the 'succession States.' She remained a kingdom although the throne was vacant; and Admiral Horthy, who filled the position of the ex-king Karl, was given the title of 'regent.' Karl made two attempts in 1921 to recover his realm, but they were frustrated by the refusal of the Little Entente to tolerate a restoration of the monarchy, which might pave the way for the reintegration of the Magyar *irredenta* in the Hungarian State. For a brief period Hungary, in imitation of the example set by Russia, was proclaimed a Soviet republic. This was in 1919 when Béla Kun established himself in power and inaugurated a Communist regime. His efforts to prevent the dismemberment of the country brought on a conflict with the 'succession States', and Roumanian forces invaded the territory and occupied the capital. The Soviet experiment collapsed after an existence of only a few months, and the conservative elements gained the upper hand. Two rival Fascist movements developed—one among the Germans settled in Hungary, and the other among the Magyars. Hence increasing support was given to the Legitimist agitation for the return of the Habsburg dynasty, by those who preferred a constitutional monarchy to a Fascist dictatorship. In spite of her tenacious and unwavering demand for the revision of the Treaty of Trianon, Hungary's hopes of regaining her pre-war frontiers were disappointed, but the dissolution of Czecho-Slovakia gave her the opportunity (1938) to seize Carpatho-Ukraine and a portion of Slovakia.

Yugo-  
slavia.

A comparison of the fate of Serbia with that of Austria provides a signal illustration of the vicissitudes which attend the destinies of nations as of individuals. When Austria delivered the ultimatum to Serbia which was the immediate occasion of the war of 1914-18, she controlled an Empire in which many subject nationalities acknowledged the hegemony of the dominant race. In marked contrast, Serbia was a small backward country crippled by dissensions among her ruling families. After the European conflagration, ignited by a spark from Vienna, had burnt itself out, Austria found herself stripped of her Empire while Serbia received a large accession of territory and population. The union of Serbia, Croatia, Montenegro, Slovenia, Dalmatia, Bosnia and the Herzegovina, created the kingdom of Yugoslavia with a population of 13½ millions. Their fusion rested on an ethnic basis—its purpose being to join together the South Slavs (Yugoslavs). When a new State is called into existence by war—and the expansion of Serbia into Yugoslavia virtually fashioned a new State—the maintenance of its integrity and even its survival may depend upon the statesmanship displayed by its rulers in eliminating the friction, which inevitably arises between the various groups now brought into close political relations with one another. Intense acrimony was evoked in Yugoslavia by the vital issue whether she should assume the form of a unified and centralized monarchy, or whether she should be content with a looser organization on federal lines which would allow regional autonomy to the Croats. The Catholic Croats and Slovenes did not wish to be dominated by the Orthodox Serbs, and they insisted on a decentralized federation of self-governing communities. This implied a Croat parliament and a separate administration. “We demand”, said the Croatian spokesmen, “complete legislative and executive freedom, having only such public business in common with Serbia as is necessary for the conduct of foreign policy.” The issue came to a head in 1928 when the Croat leaders were assassinated in parliament, and the Croat party in protest boycotted the legislature. The following year King Alexander, who was opposed to federal-

ism, established a dictatorship in order to repress separatism and create a united nation with a strong hand. As a symbol of unity the official title of 'the kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes' was discarded in favour of the designation: 'The kingdom of Yugoslavia.' The constitution was suspended, democratic organs superseded, political parties dissolved, and a strict censorship of the press enforced. The power was wielded by the king himself until his assassination in 1934 during a visit to France. The fate of Czecho-Slovakia, wrecked by internal discord, served as a timely warning to Yugoslavia and in 1939 the demands of the Croats for autonomy were conceded. In the external relations of Yugoslavia the outstanding event was the treaty with Italy in 1937, which for the time being stilled the dissensions between the two Adriatic neighbours and gave assurances that they would respect each other's frontiers.

Roumania's intervention in the war of 1914-18 on the side of the Allied Powers brought her a rich reward, for the peace settlement more than doubled her territory and her population now exceeded 16 millions. She was given the whole of Transylvania, most of Bukovina, half of Temesvár, and the Dobrudja, while she retained Bessarabia which she had seized from Russia. The early career of the enlarged Roumanian State, like that of Poland, showed that in its handling of political problems it failed signally to rise to the greatness which had been thrust upon it. During the reign of King Ferdinand (who died in 1927) the dominant figure in the political life of Roumania was Jon Bratianu, the leader of the Liberal party and virtual dictator of the country. His party, despite its name, was conservative and represented the commercial and moneyed interests. Bratianu maintained himself in office by his manipulation of the elections, and it was not until after his death which occurred in 1927 that free elections were held. The result was regarded as a 'bloodless revolution', since it swept into power (1928) the Nationalist Peasants' party which was pledged to pursue a liberal policy on the lines of a democratic

*Roumania.*



regime, uncontrolled elections, abolition of the censorship, recognition of the rights of minorities, and a more friendly attitude towards foreign capital. King Carol II—who had been excluded from the throne—became king in place of his own son in 1930, and he assumed a personal part in the shaping of politics. Roumania in common with other European countries was not immune from the spread of Fascism. The notorious Iron Guard, the most violent of the Fascist organizations, had recourse to terrorist methods with a view to intimidate its opponents. The general ferment was increased by Anti-Semitism, and the minorities in Transylvania complained of oppression. Eventually a new constitution set up an authoritarian regime, in which the king was invested with dictatorial powers. Political parties were suppressed, and the parliamentary system was reconstructed on the basis of vocational representation. In the parliament elected in 1939 the members of both houses were chosen to represent agriculture, industry, commerce, the professions, and manual labour. Thus Roumania followed the model of Fascist Italy in recasting the structure of her government. Her foreign policy was based on the Little Entente (1920–21) formed with Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, which was intended to maintain the territorial *status quo* and to bar the return of the Habsburgs to Austria or Hungary. She was also one of the four signatories of the Balkan Pact made in 1934—the other three being Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey—in which they guaranteed each other's territorial integrity against an attack from any of the Balkan States. This was intended to restrain the Great Powers from stirring up the Balkan countries against one another.

#### *Bulgaria.*

Bulgaria like other Balkan States was a prey to intestine strife. King Ferdinand paid the penalty for defeat by abdicating the throne in favour of Boris III (1918). An agrarian ministry was formed under Stambulisky, but he was assassinated in 1923 after the Government had been overthrown by a *coup d'état*. Nearly a dozen years later (1934) the army officers took it upon themselves to abolish

the democratic constitution, and substitute an authoritarian system by dissolving parliament and proscribing the political parties. The next year the king rid himself of the military control and made himself dictator, though a parliament was summoned in 1938. In Bulgaria's relations with her neighbours friction was caused for many years by the vexed problem of Macedonia, which is divided between Yugoslavia, Greece and Bulgaria. The Macedonians sought to unite the severed portions of their country into an autonomous State, and they formed secret societies which operated from Bulgaria and used terrorist methods. By making raids across the borders they prevented friendly relations between Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, until in 1937 a treaty bound the two nations to 'perpetual peace and friendship.'

Portugal became a republic in 1910 when King Manuel *Portugal.* was driven from the throne. Her subsequent history was characterized by extreme political instability and revolutionary *émeutes*. Presidents and Governments followed each other in rapid succession; and there were no less than a score of revolutions and two-score ministries between 1910 and 1926. In the latter year General Carmona installed himself in power, suspended the parliamentary regime, and set up a military dictatorship. A new constitution was framed in 1933 under which the president could select and dismiss the ministry, which was not responsible to parliament. The legislative assembly consisted of a single chamber, whose members were half elected by 'educated heads of families' and half appointed by economic bodies. Two years later the first parliament to meet since 1926 was held, but the opposition parties boycotted the elections. A Corporate State of the Fascist type was established in Portugal through the erection of corporations to control the economic life of the country.

In the North-East of Europe a group of Baltic States *Baltic States.* was carved, after the war of 1914-18, out of the former Russian Empire. Their total population only amounted

to 9 millions. Hemmed in by their neighbours—Russia, Germany and Poland—these ‘ succession States ’ maintained a precarious and far from tranquil existence. Finland alone continuously preserved her democratic constitution and principles of responsible government. The rest reflected, like a microcosm, the rival ideologies of the world around them. In Lithuania the Fascist group, known as the Nationalist Union, seized the reins of power in 1926. No parliament met for ten years (1936) when the candidates were drawn exclusively from one political party. The creation of corporate bodies in Lithuania on the Fascist pattern served to show that the notion of a Corporate State had penetrated from the shores of the Mediterranean to the Baltic. Latvia discarded her democratic institutions in 1934 when a dictatorship superseded the parliamentary system; she too formed corporate chambers as the instrument of her national economic policy. Estonia, swept by the propaganda of the Liberators (a Fascist organization), declared in 1934 in favour of authoritarian government, but the president of the republic forestalled a Fascist regime by making himself supreme and dissolving the Fascist party; three years later responsible government was restored. In the field of European politics Lithuania was the most prominent owing to her conflict with Poland over Vilna and with Germany over Memel. Lithuania claimed Vilna as her capital, but it was wrested from her by Poland in 1922; while Memel, which gave her access to the sea, was taken from her by Germany in 1939. On the lines of the Balkan Entente, a Baltic Entente was created in 1934 between Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in order to safeguard their mutual interests.

*Switzerland,  
Netherlands,  
Scandinavia.*

Not all the small States of Europe succumbed to the Fascist International in the twenties and thirties of the twentieth century. To Belgium and Finland can be added Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Scandinavia—Denmark, Sweden and Norway. These democratic countries were ardent supporters of the League of Nations, and its collapse threw them back upon their own slender resources. They were eager to avoid any entanglement in the network of



military alliances which divided Europe into two armed camps. The position of the Netherlands was indicated by the Dutch foreign minister, when he said (1937) that his country considered its "inviolability to be axiomatic and cannot be the subject of any treaty." Switzerland grew apprehensive lest, in the event of another war, she might experience the fate of Belgium; and this anxiety led her to fortify the Swiss-German border and to strengthen her national defences. Denmark was peculiarly exposed to the menace of aggression because the German minority in northern Schleswig—which was returned to Denmark (1919) as the result of a plebiscite—sought reunion with Germany. Sweden and Norway shared a common interest with Denmark in their efforts to preserve their neutrality, and periodical conferences provided a basis for combined action on the part of the three Scandinavian States.

## (VIII)

## ECONOMIC NATIONALISM

The political factors which went to the making of European history in the past quarter of a century (1914-39) cannot be dissociated from the economic factors. The interplay of political and economic forces was so intricate and involved that it becomes difficult to unravel the tangled web of cause and effect, each reacting upon the other in an unbroken sequence. It was impossible to determine whether political insecurity, which prevented disarmament and closer co-operation between the nations, was the source of the general economic *malaise* or whether the latter was the disturbing element which drew them apart. Accordingly European statesmen were unable to agree on the fundamental question whether politics should take precedence of economics or the reverse. M. Briand in his famous memorandum on the United States of Europe (1930) declared that "all possibility of progress towards economic union being strictly determined by the question of security, it is on the political plane that constructive effort should first of all be made." His critics,

*Interaction  
of politics  
and econ-  
omics.*

however, averred that "the reduction of military armaments will be a natural consequence of better and more cordial relations in the domain of commercial policy." In the economic sphere the dominating *motif* of these troubled years was the trend towards economic nationalism, which was the logical fruit and counterpart of the political nationalism inflamed and over-stimulated by the war of 1914-18. In its turn economic nationalism produced political repercussions, because it was a contributory cause of the general instability which eventually culminated in another European war in 1939. The economic rehabilitation of Europe was unquestionably an essential condition of its political pacification, yet no substantial measure of economic recovery could be achieved so long as it remained distracted by political animosities and harassed by political anxieties. This was Europe's 'Gordian Knot.'

*Economic  
national-  
ism.*

While economic nationalism was the offspring of a distorted political nationalism, its growth was encouraged by a series of impediments which strewed the path of international economic co-operation. High protective duties and 'quotas' impeded the circulation of goods; restraints on immigration impeded the circulation of persons; the curtailment of foreign loans impeded the circulation of capital; currency restrictions impeded commercial payments for commodities imported from abroad; the abandonment of the gold standard, together with the erratic movements of fugitive or 'nervous' money born of panic or distrust, impeded the stabilization of the monetary exchanges; the exaction of political debts, both reparations and inter-Allied liabilities, coupled with the uncertainties of the international situation, impeded the restoration of financial confidence. The crowning disaster of an economic depression which lasted for four years, instead of leading the nations back to economic sanity, had the reverse effect of stimulating economic nationalism since it eliminated the only great country adhering to Free Trade and threw the currencies of the world into the melting-pot. This great depression may be regarded in the light of a watershed dividing the economic history of Europe, 1918-39, into two periods. In the first the

outstanding problems were those of political debts, excessive tariffs and emigration. In the second the problem of political debts was virtually shelved, but tariff barriers remained and were reinforced by other obstacles to international trade, such as 'quotas', recourse to the barter system, currency and credit restrictions. In addition, fresh complications were introduced by the collapse of the gold standard with its unsettling effects upon the monetary exchanges, and by the trend towards 'autarky' or economic self-sufficiency. Of these various disturbing influences in the economic—and political—life of Europe we shall speak in turn.

One of the many embarrassing problems bequeathed by the war of 1914-18 related to the exaction of reparations from the defeated countries and the liquidation of war debts by their victorious adversaries. The confusion produced by the existence of vast and indeterminate obligations played an important part in retarding the recovery of Europe. Apart from the strain imposed on the national currencies and the structure of world credit by the payment of inter-governmental debts, the latter had psychological consequences in envenoming the political relations between creditors and debtors—and so creating an atmosphere of international discord. In recognition of their baneful influence, Great Britain—who had lent her Allies nearly twice as much as she had borrowed from the United States—urged the reduction or cancellation of inter-Allied debts. The rejection of this proposal made it inconceivable that the Allies should relieve the enemy of all liabilities, when they were expected to honour the obligations which they themselves had contracted. Although the original estimates of Germany's indebtedness were fantastic, they were reduced to more reasonable dimensions once the subject was removed from the sphere of politics to that of economics. The reparations commission in 1921 fixed the total at 6,600 million pounds<sup>1</sup> to be discharged by the

<sup>1</sup> Approximately one-third of this amount was for material damage, and the rest for pensions and separation allowances. War costs were not included.



issue of bonds; until they were redeemed Germany was to pay each year 100 million pounds plus 26 per cent. of the value of her exports. Subsequently in 1924 an international committee of experts formulated the 'Dawes Plan' under which the annual payments varied according to Germany's economic condition, while in order to avoid upsetting the currency the amount transferred abroad was not to exceed the surplus which she obtained from her foreign trade. Five years later the 'Young Plan' assessed reparations at nearly 2,000 million pounds, which approximated to the advances made by the United States to the Allies; the sum due was to be paid in the form of annuities averaging 100 million pounds for fifty-nine years. Thus within a few years the total amount of Germany's indebtedness had been scaled down to less than one-third; and the Allies now demanded only the equivalent of their own liabilities to the United States. However, the delay in arriving at a solution of the problem of reparations—on what may appear a reasonable basis of settlement—proved fatal to any chance of success which it might have had. For the very year in which was devised the 'Young Plan' witnessed an economic storm of unprecedented severity, which endured for four years; and when the storm had passed over the world uprooting financial institutions in its devastating course like so many trees, a completely different landscape was revealed. The leading gold currencies had been wrecked, international trade had shrunk to under half its former value, the bulwark of Free Trade had collapsed, and the vast structure of reparations and war loans lay buried in the ruins.

*The  
transfer  
problem.*

Even in normal times the liquidation of inter-governmental debts had given rise to an intractable transfer problem. A country can discharge its indebtedness abroad by the export of gold or goods or services, and by the sale of foreign securities. In the case of Germany the payment of reparations meant primarily stimulating the export of goods. Yet her creditors were also her trade competitors, and it was not in their interest that they should be undersold either in the home or in neutral markets.

The tariff walls, which all the creditor countries erected to protect their industries, enhanced the difficulties experienced by the debtor countries in meeting their obligations. The position, in short, was that each State insisted on its claims but was reluctant to accept payment in the most practicable way. - This Gilbertian situation was exposed in its true aspect by the great economic depression of which it was a contributory, though by no means the sole cause. It became apparent that an attempt to collect the German annuities involved the danger of a financial catastrophe, whose consequences might prove to be world-wide. The United States offered to suspend temporarily her own demands upon Germany's creditors, on condition that the latter suspended their demands upon Germany. The institution of a moratorium for one year (1931-32) on reparations and war debts alike eased the position only for the moment. The root causes of the *malaise* remained to fester the whole economic system, and the remedies adopted to repress the symptoms served to aggravate the disease. Tariff walls mounted higher; import 'quotas' multiplied; Great Britain discarded her traditional Free Trade policy; and as an inevitable result of this strangulation of international trade Germany's market abroad continued to shrink. In 1932 the German chancellor announced that Germany would never be in a position to resume her payments. The Western Powers were constrained to recognize that the problem of reparations, which had been a disturbing factor for over a decade, was virtually self-liquidated. Apprehensive of financial chaos if they pressed for a resumption of payments, they entered into an arrangement with Germany under which she undertook to pay 150 million pounds in final settlement of her reparation liabilities. The 'Lausanne Agreement' (1932), as it was termed, was not to come into effect until after a 'satisfactory settlement' had been reached between Germany's creditors and their own creditor, namely, the United States. Actually it put an end to the exaction of reparations from all the defeated countries.

Europe had now to face the problem of the American debt. *The American debt.*  
During and after the war of 1914-18 the United States had

made loans to the Allies of approximately 2,055 million pounds, while Great Britain advanced 1,600 million pounds and France nearly 500 million pounds. Repayment of its loans was claimed by the United States Government on the ground that "many of its loans made before the armistice [1918], and substantially all the loans made after the armistice, were not for destruction; very large amounts were spent for food, tobacco, cotton, etc." The alleged difficulties of repayment were met with the rejoinder that the expenditure of American tourists in foreign lands (1924-30) was more than double the amount received by the United States on account of debt settlement, and that the immigration remittances alone were almost equal to the receipts in the same period. "Again, in measuring the transfer question, account must be taken not only of trade directly with the United States but of the whole area of international dealings. In the total of receipts and outgoings arising from international transactions of both our debtors and ourselves, debt payments have been a relatively minor item." It was also denied that repayment drained the gold reserves of the debtor countries, since the gold holdings of the United States (apart from temporary deposits by foreign bankers) had only increased by about 8 per cent. At the same time, it was apparent that the British Government had made great exertions to fulfil its obligations. It borrowed approximately 850 million pounds, which was roughly one-third of its war expenditure in the United States, and its payments totalled nearly 50 per cent.; but the advances extended to other European Governments by the United States exceeded 1,150 million pounds on which their payments amounted to about 12 per cent. Moreover, Great Britain had waived her claims upon Germany and sacrificed the loans to her Allies amounting to 1,600 million pounds. It is ironical to observe that while the victors remained bound by their war debts—although they unwisely suspended further payments—the vanquished repudiated liability even for the final settlement to which they had pledged themselves, despite its relatively insignificant amount. The sympathy lavished upon Germany as the victim of unconscionable taskmasters



may be tempered by the reflection that—apart from deliveries in kind to make good the wilful and systematic ruin of the industrial regions in northern France—her reparations were discharged by the Allied and Associated Powers themselves. The McKenna committee of experts reported in 1924 that the amount of foreign money, lost through investments in German marks, was equal to the total payments which the German Government had furnished in cash.<sup>6</sup> Between 1924 and 1927 the influx of loan capital into Germany, attracted by the high rate of interest, exceeded the payments transferred abroad under the 'Dawes Plan.' One may conclude that in respect of reparations the maxim *væ victis!* has been stripped of its terrors—and of its potency as a deterrent.

The primary cause of the disturbed economic condition of Europe, after peace was restored in 1918, was attributed to high protective duties. The fresh frontiers created by the Treaties of Versailles, St. Germain and Trianon, to satisfy national aspirations, added more than twelve thousand miles to the existing customs barriers; and the new States vied with one another in the emulous pursuit of an economic policy which had successfully wrecked the collaboration of the old States. In these fateful years (1918-39) the world's outstanding need was the enlargement of the economic market, in order to enable the different nations to absorb a larger share of each other's products, improve their industrial processes, and provide guarantees against overproduction and unemployment. The more far-sighted readily recognized that a rational division of labour, corresponding with the situation prevailing in the various countries, would avoid the dispersion of energies in agriculture and industry which was hampering the economic life of the Continent. M. Briand's memorandum had visualized the ideal of European economic co-operation—to mould the economic organization of Europe on lines which would ensure the "establishment of a common market, to raise to the maximum the level of human well-being over all the territories of the European community." This implied a rational

plan of production and exchange based on "the progressive liberation" of the circulation of goods, capital and persons. In the comments made on the memorandum by the Governments to which it was submitted, it was observed that "an endeavour to restrict the armaments of customs policy is as important as an attempt to reduce armies and navies." Notwithstanding the force of the argument, circumstances were not propitious for the adoption of a more moderate tariff policy, and the tendency of the European Powers was to raise their customs barriers still higher. They turned a deaf ear to the remonstrances uttered by Great Britain whose system of Free Trade was placed in jeopardy by the rising tide of tariffs, and they followed instead the lead given by the United States who erected a 'Chinese wall' around her manufactures. The malign influence of excessive tariffs was not confined to the economic sphere; it proved also a fertile source of acrimony in the political sphere.

*Overpopu-  
lation.*

The counterpart of tariffs, which hinder the circulation of goods, is restraints on immigration which hinder the circulation of persons. Just as a country needs outlets for its surplus products, so it needs outlets for its surplus people. Every community experiences at some time or another the phenomenon of what is termed overpopulation. This is essentially an economic phenomenon, arising from the inability of the economic system at the moment to absorb the whole of the working population. It is usually temporary in its nature, and disappears when the economic system recovers its elasticity and is expanded to cope with the fresh demands made upon it. Thus overpopulation is not a question of the extent of territory but of economic maladjustments. England in the early seventeenth century was believed to be overpopulated, whereas she now supports perhaps seven times the number of inhabitants. Yet whenever the economic structure of a nation becomes rigid for a time, internal difficulties are created by the presence of a surplus which cannot be absorbed. Productive capacity is taxed to support the burden of those who are non-productive; labour unrest is fostered by the existence of an army of unemployed with its potential menace to the standard of life

of the working community; political instability is generated by the psychological effects of economic disequilibrium. Germany affords the most striking example of the dangers of mass unemployment, for it was the mounting waves of social distress that carried the National Socialists to power. Hence the question of the circulation of persons is second only in importance to that of the circulation of goods.

Prior to the war of 1914-18 emigration from Europe took place on a considerable scale. About 160,000 persons on an average left Great Britain every year; but in the twenties and thirties the number was halved. The decline in emigration was commonly attributed to the social services, which were supposed to diminish the incentive to seek a new life abroad; actually the arrest of emigration was general in all countries. The annual average of Italians who emigrated before 1914 was approximately half a million. Their remittances home constituted an important item in Italy's balance of international payments, though against this must be set the loss occasioned by the drain of enterprising elements. Subsequently Italian emigration fell off for reasons which affected other European nations—namely, the restraints laid on admission into the United States, the British Empire, and South America. Of these the first had been Europe's most important outlet. "America", wrote Israel Zangwill, "is God's crucible, the great Melting Pot, where all the races of Europe are melting and reforming." In the decade 1901-10 nearly 9 million immigrants entered the United States, and in the next decade which included four years of war nearly 6 millions.<sup>1</sup> To check further influx on this scale 'quota laws' were enacted (in 1921, etc.) which limited the annual number of emigrants from outside the western hemisphere to 150,000. ● It was not perhaps a coincidence that the decade which witnessed this restrictive measure also experienced the greatest depression in the history of the United States, whose industrial structure being based on the mass production of standardized goods demands an expanding population to prevent saturation of the market. Meanwhile a serious

*Restraints  
on immi-  
gration.*

<sup>1</sup> The net increase was much less owing to emigration from U.S.A.



problem was created by the fact that the New World had ceased to encourage free emigration from the Old World. The pressure of population in Europe produced two significant effects. Firstly, in conjunction with the decline in world trade it stimulated the trend towards economic self-sufficiency, for a country which is unable to exchange domestic for foreign goods or relieve itself of surplus people must reorganize its economic system. Secondly, it reinforced the demand for colonies both as sources of foodstuffs and raw materials, which could be directly bartered for the commodities and services of the mother country, and as outlets for emigrants.

*The great depression.*

The most dramatic episode in the recent economic history of Europe (1918-39) was the great depression which began in the autumn of 1929 and lasted until 1933. It was attended by momentous consequences in the economic as well as in the political sphere. It induced Great Britain to dissociate her national currency from gold—her example in this being followed by the whole world—and to reverse her traditional fiscal policy by abandoning Free Trade. It induced the United States, where the dying system of *laissez-faire* had found its last asylum, to throw her cherished economic dogmas to the winds and subject economic enterprise to an unwonted degree of official direction. It induced the Allied Powers to renounce their claims upon Germany for reparations. It induced the German people to substitute an authoritarian government for the political regime established by the Weimar constitution. And, finally, it gave an immense impetus to the movement for economic self-sufficiency.

*Causes of the depression.*

There has been much speculation as to the causes of the 'economic blizzard.' In a general sense it takes its place in the sequence of booms and depressions which follow each other in our productive processes with unfailing regularity. The phenomenon is at least three hundred years old, for in 1620-24 England suffered from a commercial crisis that contracted her markets abroad, caused widespread unemployment at home, and led to the appointment

of a royal commission—which in its analysis of the alleged causes anticipated in a remarkable way most of the explanations (including that of an overvalued currency) assigned for the crisis of 1929–33. Leaving aside the enigma of the trade cycle,<sup>1</sup> we may observe some contributory factors which throw light on the reasons for the severity of the blizzard. The war of 1914–18 left behind it an economic legacy which imposed a heavy mortgage upon the resources of all the belligerents. For the unparalleled destruction of wealth there was nothing to show beyond national debts of unprecedented magnitude. Moreover, the normal economic equilibrium had been disturbed by the substitution of a war economy for a peace economy. Industries such as coal-mining, engineering and ship-building, were inflated to meet the insatiable demands of the war; and upon the cessation of these demands there arose the acute problem of the ‘distressed areas.’ In addition, the lavish expenditure both of Governments and of individuals during the war, the emotional reaction which unsettled the minds of the post-war generation, the fluctuating currencies which caused bank balances to melt away overnight, the high rate of taxation which discouraged saving, the swift vicissitudes of international trade which might suddenly sweep away the accumulated profits of industry, the orgy of public speculation on the stock exchange markets—all these phenomena combined to produce a psychological situation in the twenties in which wasteful extravagance was rampant. While the symptoms of economic disequilibrium varied in different States, they all alike suffered from grave weaknesses in their economic structure which were ruthlessly brought to light by the great depression.

The coming storm was heralded by a drastic reduction in the prices of foodstuffs and raw materials. There was bound to be a recession from the high level which had prevailed during and after the war of 1914–18—in the absence of a corresponding adjustment of world currencies—but the sharpness of the fall was due to overproduction.

*Course of  
the depression.*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the discussion by the present writer in *Increased Production*.

Mechanization came later to agriculture than to industry; it was in a large measure the outcome of the war itself since it stimulated the use of mechanical methods of production and transport. The effects on agriculture were similar to those experienced in industry when machinery displaced hand processes, namely, overproduction and a collapse in prices: this reduced the spending power of the nations adversely affected. The fall in the prices of manufactured goods lagged considerably behind the fall in farm prices, owing to the existence of accumulated stocks and because raw materials often constitute the smallest element in the cost of production. As a result the agricultural countries, engaged in producing primary products, grew too poor to buy the finished products of the industrial countries—so that the latter in their turn began to suffer from overproduction and consequent unemployment. Thus the wheels of international commerce were clogged and a depression became unavoidable. The signal for the crisis came from the United States, whose fortune it was to provide an example of unprecedented prosperity followed by an unprecedented set-back. For some years after the war of 1914-18 it was believed that she had conquered poverty, and that economic laws were suspended in her favour. Europe sent its emissaries to discover the secrets of her success—and then in the autumn of 1929 the bubble burst. The course of events served to illustrate the economic interdependence of the nations. The collapse of trade soon extended from America to Europe, and early in the next year its malign influence had become world-wide. The economic and financial chaos which ensued may be gauged from the facts that before the end came in 1933 the prices of raw materials had fallen more than 50 per cent.; wholesale commodity prices more than 30 per cent.; while the value of international trade had shrunk even 60 per cent. The catastrophic sequel to these sweeping reductions is reflected in the statistics of unemployment. The International Labour Office's index of unemployment for the sixteen principal industrial nations shows that unemployment in 1932 was three times its volume in 1929.



To devise appropriate remedies a World Monetary and Economic Conference met in London, in June 1933, attended by sixty-four States. Unhappily the dilatoriness which invariably clogs international action had postponed its summons, until the swift Mercury of events had outpaced the leaden-footed and cumbrous mechanism of a world conference. If it had been held while the storm was still at its height, the Governments might have consented to make the sacrifices which were needed to effect a radical improvement—to scale down the tariff barriers and remove the other hindrances in the path of international trade. However, by the middle of 1933 the fury of the storm had abated and the natural forces of economic recovery were re-asserting themselves—the glut of commodities had been absorbed; trade was reviving; unemployment was on the decline; and economic nationalism, which had caught a glimpse of the abyss yawning beneath its feet, had regained its self-confidence. No sooner did the conference meet than a sharp and fatal cleavage of opinion manifested itself. On the one hand, the European countries were insistent that monetary stabilization should take precedence of all other problems, for it was impossible to carry out tariff reductions until an end was put to abnormal currency fluctuations. On the other hand, the United States was pursuing a reconstruction programme (the 'New Deal') designed to raise the level of commodity prices by depreciating the value of the dollar. In the absence of agreement on the fundamental question of currency stabilization, the conference was unable to arrest the trend towards economic nationalism and bring back the nations to economic sanity. It had failed completely in its main objectives, and the only thing which it accomplished was its own adjournment. In the economic as in the political sphere it was found to be impossible to achieve any substantial measure of international co-operation on the vital issues of the day.

Apart from the toll of human misery which the great depression took in the sufferings entailed by unemployment and bankruptcies, its importance lies in the fact that it unmoored the currencies of the world from their safe

*The World  
Economic  
Conference.*

*Effects  
of the  
depression.*

anchorage and widened the circle of the protectionist countries. These momentous consequences followed in the wake of the new direction given to the economic statecraft of Great Britain, whose reversal of her currency and fiscal policies had a profound influence upon Europe. The one ushered in a world repudiation of the gold standard, and the other shattered the chief bulwark of the Free Trade movement.

*The gold  
standard.*

Great Britain had suspended the gold standard during the war of 1914-18, but she restored it in 1925 when the national currency was made redeemable in gold, as was formerly the case. Six years later she again suspended the gold standard owing to a situation which was not of her making. One of the phenomena of post-war (1918-39) international finance was the accumulation of immense liquid assets known as 'nervous' or 'hot' money. These floating balances were moved from country to country in the form of short-term credits instead of long-term investments—accordingly as they were attracted by the high rates of interest or repelled by apprehension of political or financial insecurity. Instead of discouraging the influx of precarious and fugitive deposits of foreign money, the London financial market utilized them to make loans to German banks. Early in 1931 it found its resources seriously strained by the locking up of large funds abroad under a 'stand-still' agreement, whereby its claims upon Germany were held in abeyance. At the same time there was foreshadowed a considerable deficit on the British budget. Misgivings were enhanced by the adverse balance of Great Britain's international payments. The normal credit balance, which she had hitherto enjoyed, was converted (1931) into a debit balance owing to the fall in the receipts from her overseas investments. These various factors combined to impair confidence abroad in the soundness of the country's financial position, and to raise fears of monetary inflation. The timidity of investors is proverbial; by an excess of anxiety they produce the panic of which they live in perpetual dread. In a race for security foreign creditors hastened to transfer their funds in London to other money centres. After unavailing efforts to check

the flight from the pound, the British Government suspended the export of gold (September 1931) in order to stop the drain on its limited gold reserves. The involuntary repudiation of the gold standard was an event of more than national significance, for it gave a profound shock to the monetary system throughout the world. Within a year over forty States had followed Great Britain's example.<sup>1</sup> Apart from the fact that her position in the world economy almost necessarily involved the alignment of other Powers in their currency policy, and the consequent widening of the 'sterling area', the maldistribution of gold made the gold standard generally unworkable. The total gold supply was estimated in 1931 at about 2,300 million pounds, of which the United States had 900 millions, France 540 millions and Great Britain 118 millions.<sup>2</sup> Consequently the first two held over one-half of the total stock of gold.

The suspension of the gold standard was immediately followed in Great Britain by the abandonment of Free Trade. As early as 1921 a Safeguarding of Industries Act was passed, with a view to protect British industries against imports coming from countries whose foreign trade was artificially stimulated by the depreciation of their currencies. This measure did not infringe the basic principle of Free Trade, which assumes the existence of competition under normal conditions. Exceptional factors, such as depreciated currencies or subsidies to exporters, create abnormal conditions with which native manufacturers cannot reasonably be expected to cope. Yet a breach had been made in the ramparts of the fortress, however justifiable may have been the occasion; and this facilitated its eventual capitulation to the besieging forces. The nation became accustomed to a marked modification of its traditional fiscal practices, and grew disposed to accept without demur the more drastic changes for which the ground was being prepared. Nevertheless the Conservative Government which appealed to the electorate in 1923 in favour of Protection suffered a reverse, thus showing that at heart the country

<sup>1</sup> The United States in 1933. France, Holland and Switzerland in 1936.

<sup>2</sup> *The New International Year Book* (1931).



still remained wedded to Free Trade. When Protection was actually adopted, it came in by the side door: it was a hasty improvisation born of panic. Just as Free Trade itself owed its final victory over the last defences of Mercantilism to "the rain that rained away the Corn Laws", so the nation was stampeded into Protection by the collapse of the great bulwark of British credit, the pound sterling. In the face of a dire calamity, their minds filled with dark forebodings that the English pound might follow the way of the German mark, the British people accorded to the 'National Government' the blank cheque, the free hand, which it demanded. After the general election (1931) the 'National Government' proceeded to fill in the blank cheque with the word 'Protection.' It was explained that protective duties were necessary to reduce the volume of imports, and "redress the highly adverse trade balance which was one of the main factors in the flight from the pound in 1931", though the argument was invalidated by the depreciation of the currency which in itself afforded substantial protection. The Imports Duties Act (1932) provided that each industry should present an application to a body known as the imports duties advisory committee for its own individual protective duty. By entrusting the responsibility into the hands of a technical commission, it was hoped to eliminate the discreditable practices prevalent in other countries of exerting political pressure upon the administration for the purpose of manipulating the tariff schedules.

*Great  
Britain's  
debt to Free  
Trade.*

The ultimate consequences of this epoch-making change in British fiscal policy may not work themselves out in one generation. Perhaps for several decades to come they will continue, as hitherto, to be masked by counteracting influences. None the less, as economic conditions throughout the world return in the fulfilment of the years to the normal, the renunciation of Free Trade must exert on Great Britain its cumulative and far-reaching effects. Great Britain was the pioneer of Free Trade. By the teachings of her economists and the practice of her statesmen she taught the principles of the international division of labour;

and she offered mankind a shining example of the blessings of international trade. She stood pre-eminent as the leading commercial nation on the face of the globe, as the possessor of the largest mercantile marine, and as the world's banker and commission agent. Her population enjoyed a standard of living higher than that of any other European country. Her surplus wealth fertilized the barren places of the earth and promoted economic progress in backward lands. In her hour of need she reaped in full measure the harvest of a far-sighted economic policy. During the war of 1914-18 she not only carried her own stupendous financial burdens, but she made advances to her Allies almost twice as large as her own borrowings abroad. After the war she supported an unprecedented load of taxation and the obligations of social services, which sheltered their beneficiaries from the worst effects of economic adversity. All these things she owed to the energy of her people, to the mildness of her political institutions, and to the system of the free exchange of goods. It remains to be seen whether the new fiscal policy will leave unimpaired the volume of her commerce, the extent of her carrying trade, the vitality of her banking and insurance services, and the maintenance of her present standard of living.

Already it is possible to measure the reaction produced upon other countries by Great Britain's abandonment of Free Trade. To begin with, it had a restrictive influence on international trade and so contributed to an increase of economic nationalism in Europe. Moreover it had a marked psychological effect inasmuch as it profoundly discouraged the forces in other lands, which were inspired by the British example to work for the breaking down of the barriers to international intercourse. So long as Great Britain adhered to her century-old policy, she was the outstanding argument in favour of a universal reduction or removal of tariffs; her failure to maintain this policy in a grave emergency put back the clock of History a hundred years. Again, the reversal of British trade practices focussed attention upon the vexed problem of raw materials. While Great Britain offered an open door to imports, other nations were

*Reaction  
upon other  
countries.*

enabled to make purchases in any part of the British Empire by the sale of their products to the motherland; hence there was less disposition to challenge the British monopoly of a vast sector of the globe with its wealth of raw materials and foodstuffs, when the trade of other countries suffered from no handicaps. And lastly, British overseas investments amounted to several thousand million pounds, and both interest and repayment were made in goods. Thus in a long view of the situation Great Britain's fiscal policy must be shaped by the larger considerations of her fundamental interests—her commanding position in world trade; the highly remunerative character of her international services such as banking, investment, insurance, and merchant shipping; and, not least, her moral obligation to facilitate the freest access to the raw materials produced in her Empire.

*Autarky.*

After the great depression of 1929–33 the trend towards economic nationalism was intensified. It now began definitely to assume the form of autarky, that is, national economic self-sufficiency. Let us review the economic and political circumstances which combined to bring about this momentous departure from the orthodox principles that held sway in the nineteenth century.

*Obstacles to international trade.*

The economic factor lay in the numerous obstacles to international trade, which can be grouped under no fewer than nine heads. The most important was the tariff barriers, whose number had been greatly augmented by the creation of new republics. The second was the institution of 'quotas', by which limitations were placed on the amount of imports which one realm was willing to accept from another—a device adopted to prevent the domestic market being flooded with cheap foreign goods coming from a State with a depreciated currency. The third was the system of reciprocity, under which the exporting country undertook to make purchases of a stipulated value from the importing country. This method of balancing exports and imports with each particular territory deprived international trade of its triangular character by



which a nation buys from one and sells to another, thus enabling all parties to choose the markets best suited for their requirements. In diverting the natural currents of trade, it militated against the expansion of international commerce which is regulated by its elasticity—by its degree of immunity from any kind of restraints tending to make it rigid. The fourth was the logical corollary of the third—the direct exchange of goods for goods. The return to the primitive system of barter was revealing in the light thrown upon the shifts and devices, to which in the twentieth century some of the advanced peoples of the world had recourse. The fifth was the restrictions imposed by many States on the export of money, which forced traders to apply for a licence before they could obtain foreign currency to pay for imported merchandise. This meant, in effect, that all foreign transactions involving commercial payment had to be submitted to official scrutiny; it interrupted the normal course of trade as moulded by the interplay of the forces of supply and demand. The sixth was the violent fluctuations in the exchange value of currencies belonging to States which did not restrict the export of money. When paper currencies were no longer redeemable in gold, their mutual relations came to depend (in the absence of official control) primarily upon the confidence which they inspired abroad. Erratic quotations of exchange rates were caused by the abnormal movements of fugitive or 'nervous' money, due to the reasons already mentioned. Monetary disturbances injured a country's credit and exerted an unsettling influence on its foreign trade, for they affected the volume and profits of business transactions. The seventh was the decline of international financing, that is, the flow of capital from richer to poorer lands. Great Britain had been accustomed to make investments abroad, which had the consequence of stimulating the expansion of her export trade by opening up new markets. The locking up of large funds in Germany, an adverse balance of international payments and the abandonment of the gold standard induced the London market to reverse its policy. Similarly the United States made heavy advances—of which nearly

one-third went to Europe—until the collapse on the stock exchange and subsequently the disturbed international situation reduced her foreign financing to a minimum. Inasmuch as foreign loans are credit facilities, which are utilized by the borrowers for the purchase of commodities, the curtailment of international financing must be counted among the obstacles to international trade. The eighth was the sense of insecurity, which in destroying confidence checked the revival of trade and finance. The ninth was the diversion of national resources from the normal channels to meet the devouring needs of re-armament, which now took place on a vast scale. While the nations continued to arm against each other, they had less to spend on the purchase abroad of materials and goods for domestic consumption.

*The  
political  
trend.*

The cumulative effect of all the impediments enumerated above was to circumscribe the sphere of international economic co-operation and to throw the countries back upon their own resources. A political factor—the rise of the totalitarian States—powerfully reinforced this tendency. To a totalitarian State which seeks to gather up all the political, economic and cultural forces in the life of the community and place them under the rigid control of the dominant faction, it appeared anomalous that the economic existence of the nation should be dependent upon foreign sources of supply. The European dictatorships had experienced the dangers to which their economic position exposed them upon the outbreak of war. The collapse of Germany in the war of 1914–18 was accelerated by the naval blockade which ultimately brought the people to semi-starvation. The imposition of economic sanctions on Italy during the Abyssinian war lacked the time element to be effective, but it served as a significant reminder of her economic weaknesses. Foreign support of the enemies of the Bolshevik Revolution convinced the rulers of Russia that the survival of the Soviet Union in a capitalist world necessitated a policy of rapid industrialization. Thus the inter-action of economic and political forces produced a state of affairs in which, over the greater part of Europe,

economic nationalism marched hand in hand with political nationalism. We have spoken elsewhere of the industrialization of Russia designed to liberate her from dependence upon the capitalist Powers. Here we shall refer to the efforts of Germany and Italy to achieve economic self-sufficiency (autarky), with the twofold objectives of promoting national security and providing a substitute for a dwindling foreign trade.

The economic policy of the Third German Reich took *German economic policy.* formal shape and substance in 1936 when the 'four-year plan' was put into operation. Its purpose was expressed in the slogan 'Guns in place of butter', which summed up in a phrase the economic programme of National Socialism. It was intended to establish the new rulers of Germany in a condition to pursue their policy at home and abroad with complete indifference to its reaction upon public sentiment in other countries. In peace-time they would be enabled to ignore the threat of economic sanctions; while in the event of war they could withstand a naval blockade even if it endured (so it was vaunted) 'for thirty years.' The crux of the problem of economic self-sufficiency is the production of domestic supplies of raw materials. Artificial substitutes for foreign commodities were invented, such as synthetic wool and rubber; low-grade iron ores were utilized; liquid fuel was distilled from coal; more intensive cultivation of arable land was encouraged in order to restrict grain imports; the growing of potatoes and sugar beets was expanded. The general result was to lower the standard of living, since the consumer found that commodities were not only more expensive but also inferior in quality; nor did flour and other foods escape adulteration. At the same time it served for the moment, in conjunction with other factors, to diminish unemployment. These other factors were the lavish expenditure on armaments and public works (including land reclamation), the revival of military conscription, the institution of labour camps, the compulsion put on employers to enlarge their staffs beyond their actual requirements, the discouragement of female labour, the shortening of hours coupled with reduced earnings, and finally the strict



*Italian  
economic  
policy.*

regimentation of the economic system which was placed on virtually a war-footing.<sup>1</sup> In Italy a similar combination of straitened resources and nationalist sentiment created a parallel situation. Early in 1936, while the Abyssinian war was still in progress, Mussolini declared: "Political independence, that is, the possibility of pursuing an independent foreign policy, cannot be conceived without the corresponding possibility of economic independence." Economic warfare, that invisible warfare which Geneva undertook for the first time against Italy, would in the long run vanquish even a nation of heroes." Italy lacked certain raw materials such as petrol, rubber and the better qualities of coal, while her supplies of homegrown wool were inadequate for her needs. To repair her deficiencies she endeavoured to provide synthetic wool, synthetic perfumes and synthetic nitrogen; to find substitutes for potash salts and other fertilizers needed for agriculture; to procure liquid fuel from lignite, etc.; to replace cotton with native fibres; and to utilize other scientific discoveries for overcoming her poverty in raw materials. In regard to foodstuffs, she increased the yield of wheat crops in the hope of "freeing the Italian people from the slavery of foreign bread."

*Problem of  
raw  
materials.*

The progress of science in the twentieth century makes the ideal of economic self-sufficiency less visionary than it formerly appeared. Nations with meagre resources are still upon the threshold of unexplored possibilities of reorganizing their national economy by the discovery of substitutes, which may redress the balance between them and the

<sup>1</sup> The regimentation of German economic life appeared to be the outcome, not of a constructive effort to remould the economic system on the principle of the Corporate State (as in Italy), but of a provisional arrangement designed to place industry and agriculture on a war-footing as part of the country's military preparedness. An agricultural corporation, whose membership included all engaged in the production, manufacture and sale of foodstuffs, was charged with the function of regulating agriculture on the lines established by official policy—*e.g.* controlling prices and fixing the quantities of produce to be furnished to the market. Through the medium of an economic corporation the Government was endowed with complete authority over industry, commerce and banking. It had, for instance, the right to forbid the expansion of industrial plants or the opening of retail shops, and to limit dividends by investing the surplus in public loans. Recalcitrant employers could be eliminated from the direction of their businesses, and labour unions were deprived of their independence. Foreign trade and the foreign exchanges were virtually nationalized.

owners of natural monopolies. This would carry a stage further man's conquest of Nature. Meanwhile the trend towards autarky has produced effects which are partly economic and partly political. For one thing, it serves to impress a more permanent character on what might otherwise prove a temporary phenomenon, namely, the widespread reaction against a world economy based on the international division of labour. For another thing, it may offset in a partial degree the curtailment of emigration, in so far as additional labourers are needed in their own country or in its colonies to carry out the reconstruction schemes projected under a planned economy. This development is in harmony with the Mercantilist doctrine which viewed productive labour as a national asset to be kept at home. Above all, autarky has raised an issue profoundly affecting the workings of European politics—the uneven distribution of raw materials. The common argument that no one is hindered from purchasing raw materials becomes irrelevant when a nation finds itself unable to buy them, because it cannot sell goods abroad to pay for them. Moreover, the scheme of autarky breaks down at its most vulnerable point if the access to raw materials remains under foreign control, and can be withheld to serve the purpose of an economic 'sanction.' Nor must the demographic aspect be overlooked: as one by one the avenues to immigration are closed up, the territories which cannot absorb their redundant population will press for colonies of their own to provide relief. Unquestionably the colonial problem will be a cardinal factor in determining the future relations of European countries. Nevertheless it cannot be settled independently of other and larger issues confronting the European state-system. While even in time of peace the world remains armed to the teeth, and the menace of war hangs suspended like the sword of Damocles, the redistribution of raw materials would serve only to whet the appetites of the aggressive Powers and to eliminate the weakest links in their armour; nay more, it would powerfully reinforce the trend towards economic nationalism with its baneful repercussions on political relationships. Yet when Europe in a chastened

mood seeks by pacific means to reach a better understanding, then a reasonable solution of the problem of raw materials as part of a general settlement should not prove beyond the capacity of statesmanship.

Neo-  
Mercantil-  
ism

There is a striking similarity between the economic statecraft of the present day, which we may term neo-Mercantilism, and the Mercantile System as it existed in the seventeenth century.<sup>1</sup> Both are inspired by the same fundamental purpose—the attainment of economic self-sufficiency as the corollary of political independence. Both have recourse to the same methods of achieving their purpose—the discouragement of imports, the policy of a balanced trade with each particular country, the prohibition of the export of gold, the manipulation of the currencies, the promotion of key industries, and the regimentation of economic life in order to divert the productive energies of the community into the appropriate channels. If the economists of the seventeenth century were to return to the Europe of our own times they would find themselves in a familiar atmosphere; if Adam Smith came back he would feel that *The Wealth of Nations* had been written in vain. Thus under changed conditions the world has reverted to an economic system which it was thought to have discarded for ever. The historian may exclaim with Ecclesiastes: "There is no new thing under the sun!"

<sup>1</sup> E. Lipson, *The Economic History of England*, vols. ii and iii ("The Age of Mercantilism").

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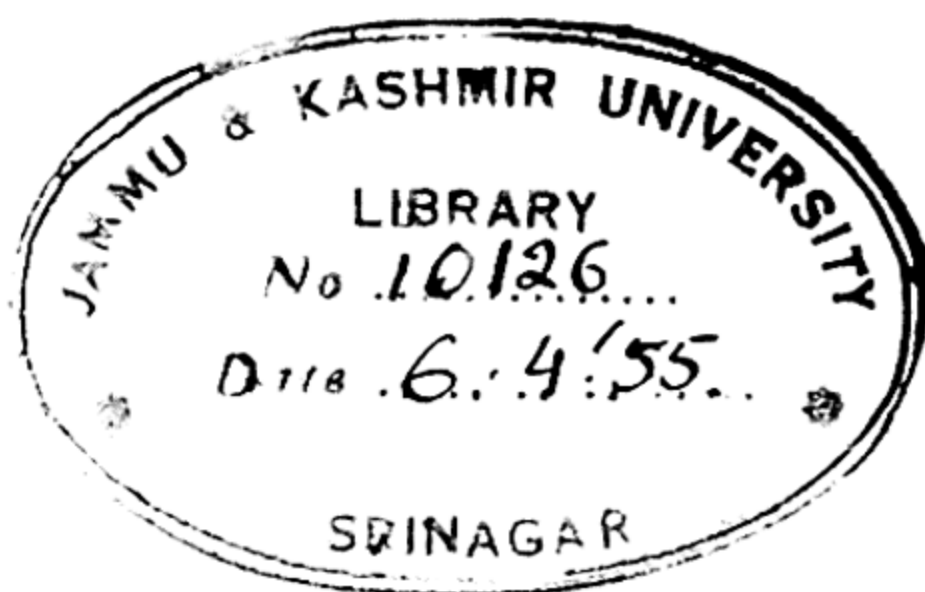
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